TRANSFORMERS
MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

VOLUME 8

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TRANSFORMERS
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VOLUME 8

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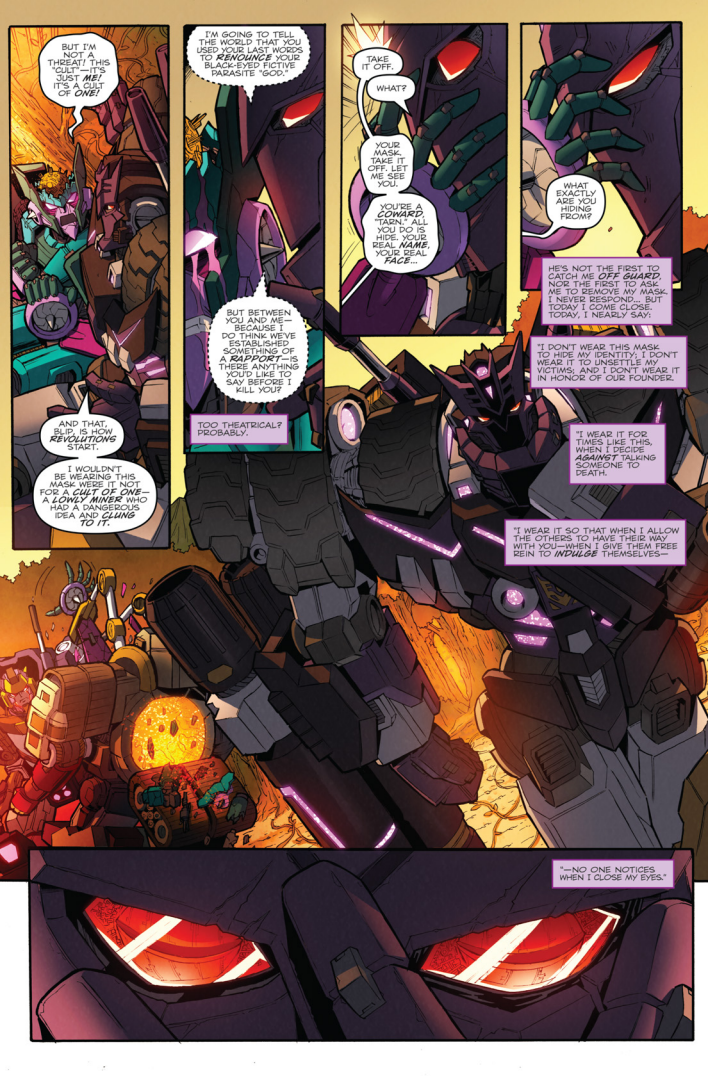
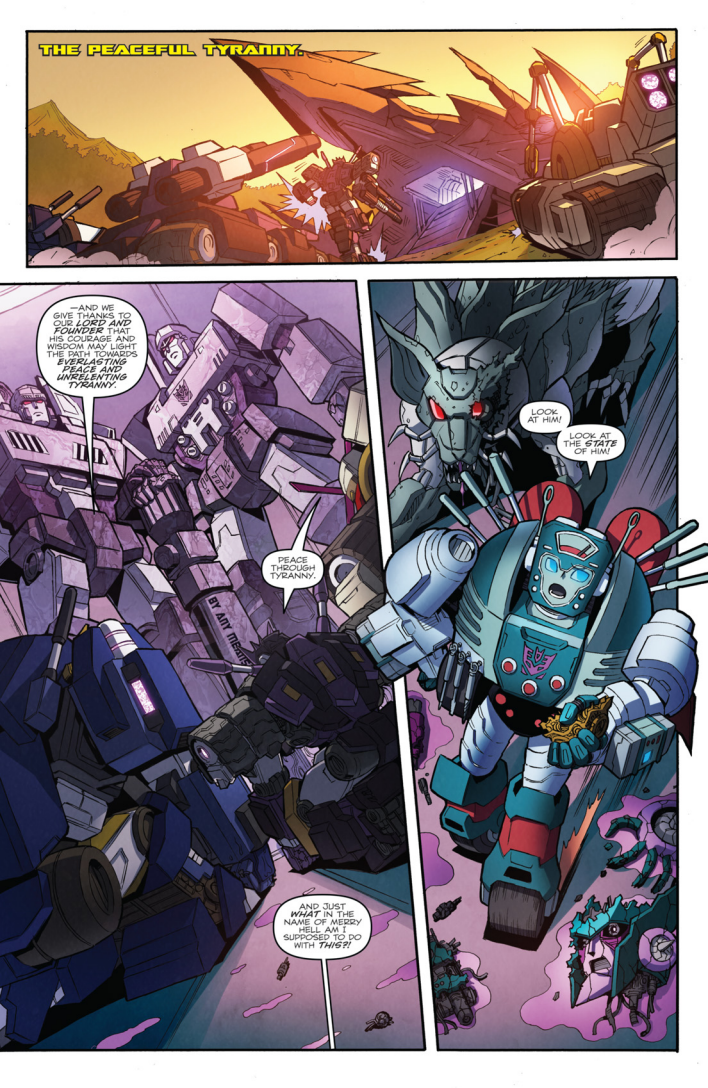
MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #39 COVER A

by **ALEX MILNE** Colors by **JOSH PEREZ**

THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION: (1) TROIKA

HE'S STILL ALIVE, HELEX- WHICH MEANS YOU LOST YOUR BET.
PUT HIS BRAIN BACK WHERE YOU FOUND IT SO HE AND I CAN CHAT.
IMPRESSIVE.
NORMALLY, IF SOMEONE WAKES UP WITH HIS BRAIN IN HIS MOUTH AND SEES THE PEOPLE WHO PUT IT THERE STILL STANDING IN FRONT OF HIM, HIS FIRST INSTINCT—
—IS TO START CHEWING.
NOW THEN, YOUR SPARKEATER CULT. IT'S—
SIGH.
IT'S SPECTACULARLY AT ODDS WITH DECEPTICON DOCTRINE.
SURELY YOU KNOW THIS. SURELY THIS DOESN'T COME AS A SURPRISE TO YOU.
EVEN SOMEONE WITH THE MOST RUDIMENTARY GRASP OF MEGATRON'S TEACHINGS MUST REALIZE THAT A DECEPTICON UTOPIA CANNOT ACCOMMODATE ANY FORM OF RELIGION.
W—WHY?
WHY? BECAUSE RELIGION IS A FORM OF CONTROL. IT OFFERS SUCCOR IN RETURN FOR DOCILITY AND BESTOWS POWER UNTO AN AUTHORITY OTHER THAN MEGATRON.
SO WHEN A DECEPTICON STARTS A NEW RELIGION, IT'S... WELL.
YOU SAY IT'S AN ATTEMPT AT FINDING PEACE OF MIND. I SAY IT'S AN ATTEMPTED COUP.
B–B–B–
"B–B–B–"
WHY DID I DO THAT? I SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT. I SHOULDN'T HAVE MOCKED HIM. THAT WAS BENEATH ME.

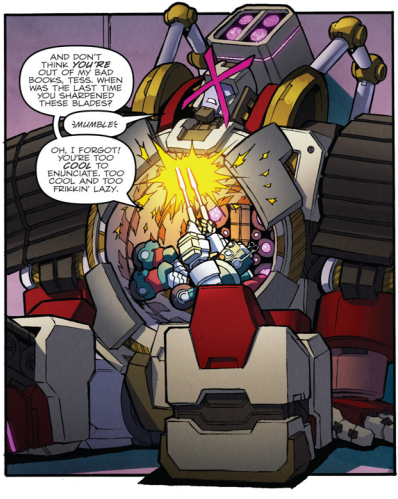

BUT I'M NOT A THREAT! THIS "CULT"—IT'S JUST *ME!* IT'S A CULT OF *ONE!*
AND THAT, SIR, IS HOW *REVOLUTIONS* START.
I WOULDN'T BE WEARING THIS MASK WERE IT NOT FOR A *CULT OF ONE*—A *LONLY MINER* WHO HAD A DANGEROUS IDEA AND *CLUNG TO IT.*
I'M GOING TO TELL THE WORLD THAT YOU USED YOUR LAST WORDS TO *RENOUNCE* YOUR BLACK-EYED FIVE PARASITE "GOD."
BUT BETWEEN YOU AND ME—BECAUSE I DO THINK WE'VE ESTABLISHED SOMETHING OF A *RAPPORT*—IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO SAY BEFORE I KILL YOU?
TOO THEATRICAL? PROBABLY.
TAKE IT OFF.
WHAT?
YOUR MASK. TAKE IT OFF. LET ME SEE YOU.
YOU'RE A *COWARD*, TARN.* ALL YOU DO IS HIDE. YOUR REAL *NAME*, YOUR REAL *FACE*...
WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU HIDING FROM?
HE'S NOT THE FIRST TO CATCH ME *OFF GUARD*, NOR THE FIRST TO ASK ME TO REMOVE MY MASK. I NEVER RESPOND... BUT TODAY I COME CLOSE. TODAY, I NEARLY SAY:
"I DON'T WEAR THIS MASK TO HIDE MY IDENTITY; I DON'T WEAR IT TO UNSETTLE MY VICTIMS; AND I DON'T WEAR IT IN HONOR OF OUR FOUNDER.
"I WEAR IT FOR TIMES LIKE THIS, WHEN I DECIDE *AGAINST* TALKING SOMEONE TO DEATH.
"I WEAR IT SO THAT WHEN I ALLOW THE OTHERS TO HAVE THEIR WAY WITH YOU—WHEN I GIVE THEM FREE REIN TO *INDULGE* THEMSELVES—
"—NO ONE NOTICES WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES."


THE PEACEFUL TYRANNY.
—AND WE GIVE THANKS TO OUR LORD AND FOUNDER THAT HIS COURAGE AND WISDOM MAY LIGHT THE PATH TOWARDS EVERLASTING PEACE AND UNRELENTING TYRANNY.
PEACE THROUGH TYRANNY.
AND JUST WHAT IN THE NAME OF MERRY HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH THIS?!
LOOK AT HIM!
LOOK AT THE STATE OF HIM!

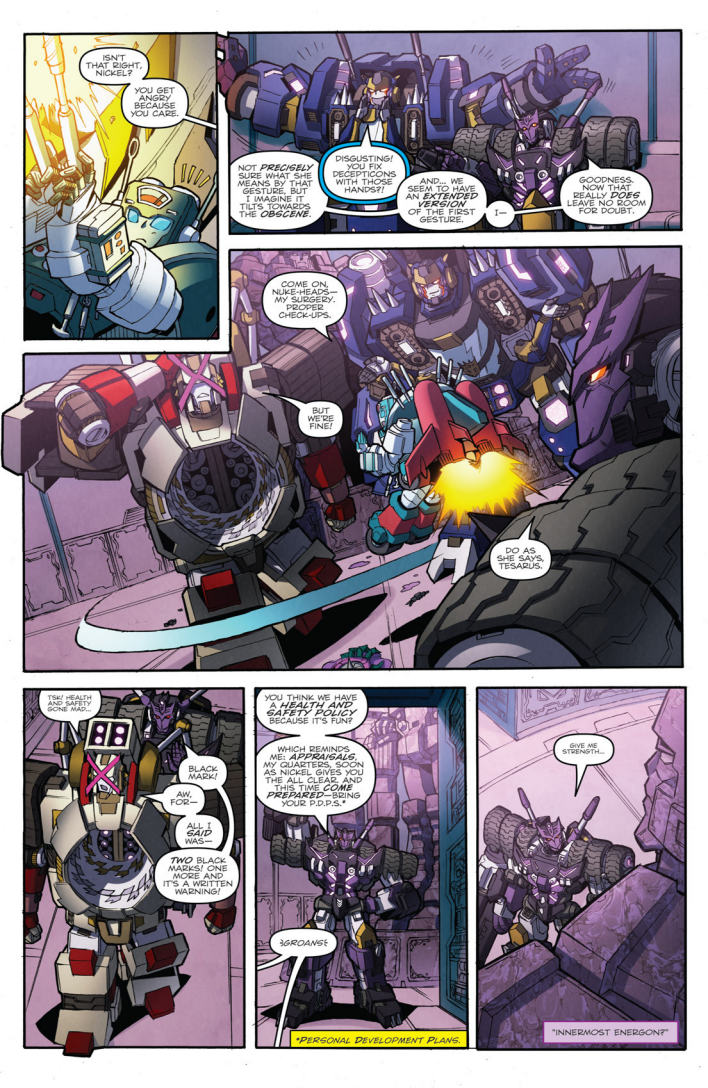
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU? WHEN YOU'RE OUT *HUNTING*, MAKE SURE YOU—
TARN! *HOW MANY TIMES?* I CAN'T RECYCLE A TRANSFORMATION COG IF IT'S ALL *SMOOSHED UP*.
NICKEL—
"SMOOSHED UP"....
....BEING A *HIGHLY TECHNICAL MEDICAL TERM* THAT YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF BECAUSE YOU'RE AN UNRECONSTRUCTED KILLING MACHINE.

"UNRECONSTRUCTED"? I MAY BE MANY THINGS, BUT—
NA-NA-NA-NA-NA! *ENOUGH!*
JUST BECAUSE I'M THE SIZE OF AN *ENERGON CUBE* DOESN'T MEAN I CAN'T PUT YOU IN YOUR PLACE.

HIM *AND* YOU, HELEX. NOW, OPEN WIDE AND SAY, "I'M SORRY I'VE BEEN NEGLECTING MY ORAL HYGIENE."
Glahrh....
FILTHY, FILTHIER THAN THE INSIDE OF—
BY *PRIOW'S SHADOW*, IS THAT *CRANIAL FLUID*? IT IS! IT'S CRANIAL FLUID!
YOU ARE OFFICIALLY WORSE THAN *THE FET*...


AND DON'T THINK *YOU'RE* OUT OF MY BAD BOOKS, TESS. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SHARPENED THESE BLADES?
MUMBLE
OH. I FORGOT! YOU'RE TOO *COOL* TO ENUNCIATE. TOO COOL AND TOO FRIKKIN' LAZY.

I SWEAR SHE GETS CROSSER EVERY DAY.
SHE WORRIES WHEN WE'RE IN THE FIELD.


ISN'T THAT RIGHT, NICKEL?
YOU GET ANGRY BECAUSE YOU CARE.
NOT PRECISELY SURE WHAT SHE MEANS BY THAT GESTURE, BUT I IMAGINE IT TILTS TOWARDS THE OBSCENE.
DISGUSTING! YOU FIX DECEPTICONS WITH THOSE HANDS?!
AND... WE SEEM TO HAVE AN EXTENDED VERSION OF THE FIRST GESTURE.
I—
GOODNESS. NOW THAT REALLY DOES LEAVE NO ROOM FOR DOUBT.
COME ON, NUKE-HEADS— MY SURGERY, PROPER CHECK-UPS.
BUT WE'RE FINE!
DO AS SHE SAYS, TESARUS.
TSK! HEALTH AND SAFETY GONE MAD...
BLACK MARK!
AW, FOR—
ALL I SAID WAS—
TWO BLACK MARKS! ONE MORE AND IT'S A WRITTEN WARNING!
YOU THINK WE HAVE A HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY BECAUSE IT'S FUN?
WHICH REMINDS ME: APPRAISALS. MY QUARTERS, SOON AS NICKEL GIVES YOU THE ALL CLEAR. AND THIS TIME COME PREPARED—BRING YOUR P.D.P.S.*
&GROANS&
*PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS.
GIVE ME STRENGTH...
"INNERMOST ENERGON?"

TARN'S QUARTERS.

NO THANK YOU.

AS YOU WISH. IT'S A *FINE VINTAGE*, THOUGH.

RIVETS FIELD, 1ST CYCLE ODV.

TEGARUG: SULLEN. CAPRICIOUS. FEROCIOUSLY VIOLENT. AND RIGHT NOW: NERVOUS AS HELL.

HE HATES THIS. THEY *ALL* HATE THIS.

THE SELF-ASSESSMENT MATRICES, THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS, THE BALANCED SCORECARDS—THIS ISN'T WHAT THEY SIGNED UP FOR.

I WON'T DRAG THIS OUT. I'M LARGELY HAPPY WITH YOUR PERFORMANCE.

THAT'S NOT TO SAY THERE ISN'T ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT, BUT NO, BY AND LARGE I'M SATISFIED.

AND YET I KNOW THAT THE DECEPTICON EMPIRE WILL STAND OR FALL ON THE STRENGTH OF ITS *INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION*.

MEGATRON KNOWS THIS TOO—FOR WHAT IS THE DECEPTICON JUSTICE DIVISION IF NOT A FORM OF *EXTREME PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT*?

I THOUGHT THE MANNEE IN WHICH YOU DISPATCHED *BOREBIT* WAS PARTICULARLY INNOVATIVE—AND YOU HELPED CAPTURE *HERETECH* WHEN HE PROVED TOO MUCH FOR KAON. SO... FULL MARKS FOR *THAT*.

YEAH, GOOD, THANKS.

SOMETHING'S BOTHERING YOU. COME ON. YOU KNOW THESE THINGS SHOULDN'T BE LEFT UNTIL YOUR APPRAISAL....

I ALREADY KNOW WHAT HE'S GOING TO SAY.

VOS, VOS AND KAON....

VOS AND KAON....

EIGHTEEN MONTHS AGO, AN *UNDERCOVER AGENT* ABOARD AN AUTOBOT STARSHIP—THE *LOST LIGHT*—OFFERED US AN OPPORTUNITY TO TICK A NAME OFF *THE LIST*.

OVERLORD? OVERLORD'S YOUR *PRISONER?*

MORE LIKE AN *UNWILLING STOWAWAY*. BUT YEAH, HE'S HERE, AND I CAN PROVE IT. I'LL *DESCRAMBLE HIS ENERGY SIGNATURE* SO YOU CAN PINPOINT HIM.

ONE PROVISO: WHEN YOU COME TO COLLECT, NO ONE ELSE GETS HURT.

I MEAN IT, TARN. IF YOU ATTACK THE CREW YOU'LL BLOW MY COVER—AND BELIEVE ME, I'M THIS CLOSE TO THE *JACKPOT*.

I HAD EVERY INTENTION OF KEEPING MY WORD...

...UNTIL I SAW WHO ELSE WAS ON THE *LOST LIGHT*.

WE WERE STILL BUZZING FROM THE NUKE, AND RUNNING INTO ***DEADLOCK***—OR "DRIFT", AS HE'D TAKEN TO CALLING HIMSELF... WELL, I THINK RUNNING INTO HIM SERVED AS SOMETHING OF A ***TRIGGER***, AND ONCE WE'D KILLED ONE, IT WAS HARD TO STOP.

LAST MONTH, AT NICKEL'S INSISTENCE, WE RETURNED TO ***OFSTED XVII*** TO THE MURDER SCENE. SHE COULDN'T BELIEVE WE'D MISSED THE OPPORTUNITY TO STEAL THE LOST ***LIGHT'S QUANTUM ENGINES***.

WE ARRIVED TO FIND THE ***GALACTIC COUNCIL*** AND THE ***BLACK BLOCK CONSORTIA*** FIGHTING OVER THE SAME PRIZE.

WE ATTACKED, OF COURSE—I'D SOONER DIE THAN ALLOW ***ORGANICS*** TO GET THEIR PUDGY LITTLE HANDS ON CYBERTRONIAN TECHNOLOGY.

SADLY, OUR INTERVENTION GAVE THEM A PERFECT EXCUSE TO ***JOIN FORCES***—

—AND AS VOS AND KAON CHASED A ***COUNCIL SQUAD*** TO THE PLANET BELOW, THE ***REINFORCEMENTS*** SHOWED UP: A THOUSAND WARP SHIPS, MAYBE MORE...

YOU'RE UPSET BECAUSE WE RETREATED—BECAUSE WE LEFT VOS AND KAON BEHIND...

DECEPTICONS DON'T ABANDON THEIR OWN.

KAH

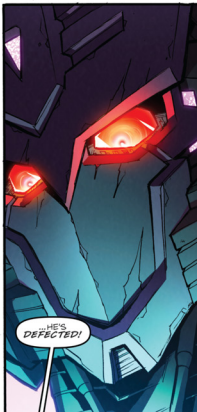
DON'T YOU EVER
EVER!
TELL ME
WHAT DECEPTICONS DO
AND DON'T DO.
UNDERSTOOD?
AKK!

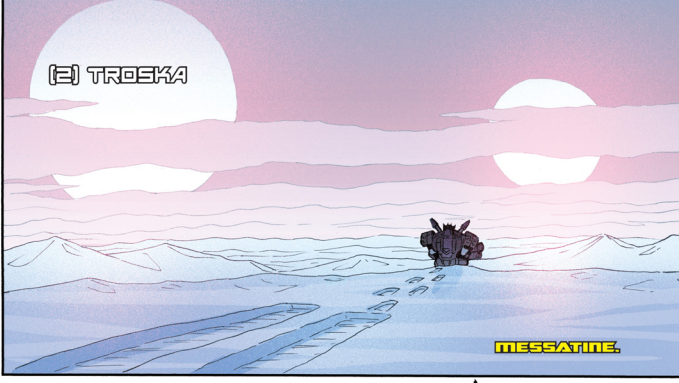
I'LL LET IT SLIDE— THIS TIME.
AS FOR YOUR COMRADES... I'VE ALREADY GIVEN ORDERS TO COLLECT THEIR BODIES.
REALLY?
TWO HOURS AGO. I TOLD HELEX TO TAKE US BACK TO OPSTED XVII AND—
TARN!

THEY'RE ALIVE! THEY'RE OKAY! THEY'RE HERE!
WHAT?
VOS AND KAON!
I JUST TELEPORTED THEM ON BOARD!
THAT'S... INCREDIBLE.
THAT'S NOTHING.
LOOK WHAT THEY BROUGHT WITH THEM.

YOU HAVE TO WATCH IT...
TOWARDS PEACE? HELEX, I'VE READ THIS A HUNDRED THOUSAND TIMES. I'VE GOT THE FIRST EDITION MOUNTED ON MY WALL. I HARDLY THINK I—
I SAID WATCH IT, NOT READ IT.
THERE'S SOME NEW FOOTAGE AT THE END THAT YOU WILL NOT BELIEVE.

I AM THE FOUNDER OF THE DECEPTICON MOVEMENT. I STARTED IT—!
IT'S MEGATRON, COMMANDER...


...HE'S DEFECTED!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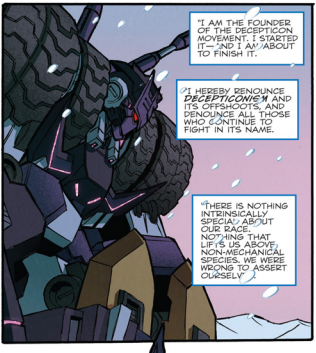
MESSATINE.


"I AM THE FOUNDER OF THE DECEPTICON MOVEMENT. I STARTED IT—AND I AM ABOUT TO FINISH IT.
"I HEREBY DENOUNCE DECEPTICONS AND ITS OFFSHOOTS, AND DENOUNCE ALL THOSE WHO CONTINUE TO FIGHT IN ITS NAME.
"THERE IS NOTHING INTRINSICALLY SPECIAL ABOUT OUR RACE. NOTHING THAT LIFTS US ABOVE NON-MECHANICAL SPECIES. WE WERE WRONG TO ASSERT OURSELVES."

"AND TO ALL THOSE WHO FOLLOW ME, I SAY THIS: DO NOT EXPECT GUIDANCE, OR WISDOM, OR ANSWERS. I HAVE NONE. I NEVER DID.
"TO THOSE DECEPTICONS STILL OUT THERE, I GIVE ONE FINAL ORDER: STAND DOWN. DISCARD YOUR WEAPONS, TEAR OFF YOUR BADGES, AND STAND DOWN.

"THE DECEPTICONS ARE OVER.
"THE WAR IS OVER."

"FREE YOURSELF FROM THE SHACKLES OF A FLAWED PHILOSOPHY AND MOVE ON.
KAON?
MEET ME IN THE FUELING CHAMBER.

TWO MILES BELOW GROUND.

URHH!

URHH!

FIND THE CLEANSE

SO THIS IS IT—THE LEGENDARY *NUKE*. HATE TO SAY IT, BUT YOUR "SUPERFUEL" LOOKS SUSPICIOUSLY LIKE BOG-STANDARD *NUCLEON*.

CAREFUL. WE DON'T HAVE MUCH LEFT.

SO GRAB A DRILL. WE'RE STANDING IN A *NUCLEON MINE*, ARE WE NOT?

(NICE TO FINALLY SEE THE HOMESTEAD, BY THE WAY...)

THIS ISN'T NUCLEON—NOT ANY MORE. THIS IS *UNIQUE*—AND *FINITE*.

IT SEEMS THE CRYSTALS IN THIS MINE—IN THIS PARTICULAR SHAFT—WERE ONCE EXPOSED TO A BURST OF *TEMPORAL ENERGY*.

THE ENERGY—AND FOR THE LIFE OF ME I CAN'T REPLICATE ITS BASE-LINE SIGNATURE—ACTED AS A SLOW-BURNING *CATALYST*. OVER THE NEXT FEW MILLION YEARS, IT REWROTE THE CRYSTALS' ATOMIC STRUCTURE—TURNED THEM INTO SOMETHING NEW.

YEAH—THE ULTIMATE *PERFORMANCE ENHANCER*...

SO HOW MUCH OF THIS STUFF DID YOU SHIP OUT TO *HIGH COMMAND*?

NONE.

TARN REFUSED TO TELL ANYONE EXCEPT *MEGATRON*—AND HE WAS *OFF GRID** WHEN WE MADE THE DISCOVERY.

*SEE *TRANSFORMERS (2009)* ISSUE #18 ONWARDS.

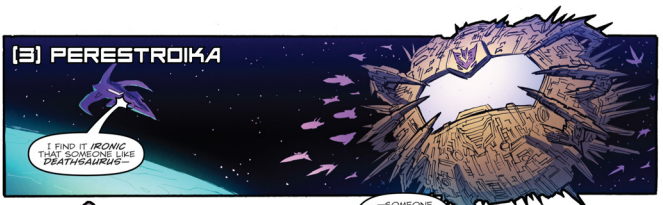
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

TARN'S BEEN IN THERE *AGES*. IF THIS STUFF IS HALF AS POTENT AS YOU CLAIM, INGESTING TOO MUCH OF IT COULD DO *SERIOUS* DAMAGE.

LEAVE HIM. HE KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING.

I KNOW—AND THAT'S WHAT WORRIES ME...

AS MY BODY SURRENDERS TO THE PAIN, AND AS THE PAIN BECOMES SOMETHING MORE *COMPLICATED*—
—AND AS MY SEA GREEN SPARK BEGINS TO *MOTTLE* AND *CONTRACT*—
—I FIND MYSELF LOOKING *BACKWARDS.*
AS I REALIZE THAT *THIS IS IT*—THAT I'M ABOUT TO DIE—I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL SOMEWHAT *DISAPPOINTED* BY THE EXPERIENCE.
BUT THEN AGAIN, WHAT WAS I EXPECTING? MUSIC? A *BRIGHT LIGHT?*
A *VISION?*
STISH
HRK!
HRK!
HRK!
CHANGE OF PLAN.



—SOMEONE FAMOUS FOR TURNING MUDBALLS INTO PRISTINE *MINI-CYBERTRONS*—

—SHOULD TAKE SUCH POOR CARE OF HIS WARWORLD.

EXCEPT IT'S *NOT* HIS WARWORLD, IS IT? NOT ANYMORE.

HE *STOLE* IT SO HE COULD GO GALLIVANTING AROUND THE *GALACTIC RIM* WITH HIS *GROUPIES*.

I PRESUME THAT'S WHY WE'RE HERE. TARN? *LEVEL 5 INFRACTION?* AGGRAVATED THEFT? THAT'S WHAT IT SAYS ON *THE LIST*.

SPEAKING OF WHICH, NOTICE WE SEEM TO HAVE *SKIPPED A FEW NAMES*. ARE WE NOT KILLING PEOPLE IN ORDER ANYMORE?

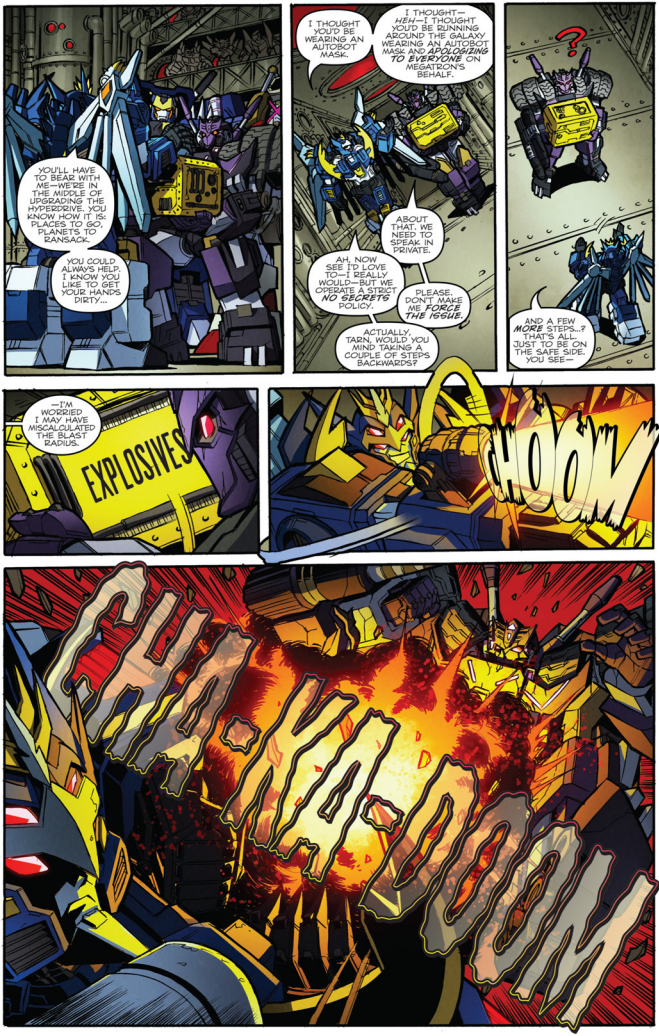
TARN...?

"...IT'S A *RENDEZVOUS*."

I'M SORRY, COMMANDER. I TOLD HIM YOU WERE BUSY, BUT HE INSISTED ON SEEING YOU NOW.

DONT APOLOGIZE, *BACCHUS*.

TARN IS A *VORACIOUS CONSUMER*—MUSIC, ENERGON, T-COGS... BUT HE'S NEVER HAD MUCH OF AN APPETITE FOR *WAITING*.


YOU'LL HAVE TO BEAR WITH ME—WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF UPGRADING THE HYPERDRIVE. YOU KNOW HOW IT IS: PLACES TO GO, PLANETS TO RANSACK.
YOU COULD ALWAYS HELP. I KNOW YOU LIKE TO GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY...
I THOUGHT YOU'D BE WEARING AN AUTOBOT MASK.
I THOUGHT—HEH—I THOUGHT YOU'D BE RUNNING AROUND THE GALAXY WEARING AN AUTOBOT MASK AND APOLOGIZING TO EVERYONE ON MEGATRON'S BEHALF.
ABOUT THAT. WE NEED TO SPEAK IN PRIVATE.
AH, NOW SEE I'D LOVE TO—I REALLY WOULD—BUT WE OPERATE A STRICT NO SECRETS POLICY.
PLEASE, DON'T MAKE ME FORCE THE ISSUE.
ACTUALLY, TARN, WOULD YOU MIND TAKING A COUPLE OF STEPS BACKWARDS?
?
AND A FEW MORE STEPS...? THAT'S ALL—JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE. YOU SEE—
—I'M WORRIED I MAY HAVE MISCALCULATED THE BLAST RADIUS.
EXPLOSIVES
CHOOM
CHUKKUDUDUM

A "RENDEZVOUS"? PLEASE.

WHEN A FANATIC FAMOUS FOR KILLING WITH HIS VOICE SAYS HE WANTS TO DROP BY FOR A *QUIET WORD*, IT'S HARD NOT TO JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS.

IT'S AT TIMES LIKE THESE THAT I REGRET MY REPUTATION AS A *SMOOTH TALKER*.

I WAS BORN WITH A *DEADLY GIFT*—ALBEIT ONE THAT WAS SLOW TO MANIFEST ITSELF—BUT SOMETIMES I WISH IT DIDN'T DEFINE ME.

WARNING SHOT!

KOOM

CLING

DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY OF MY TROOPS YOU'VE *SLAUGHTERED* OVER THE YEARS?

HOW MANY GOOD DECEPTICONS YOU'VE *PICKED OFF* JUST BECAUSE THEY STOOD BY ME?

HNNF!

WE SHOULD INTERVENE.

VOS IS RIGHT—HE WOULDN'T THANK US.

OKAY, BUT JUST SO WE KNOW—IF THIS ALL GOES WRONG—I PUT THE SUGGESTION OUT THERE.

BE *REASONABLE*, DEATHSAURUS. ALL I—

UGH!

ALL I WANT IS THE OPPORTUNITY TO *EXPLAIN MYSELF*.

YOU KNOW, THIS *WEAPONIZED CONVERSATION* SHTICK IS GETTING PRETTY OLD.

ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SHUT DOWN MY *AUDIO SENSORS* AND—THERE WE GO. I'VE JUST PUT YOU ON *MUTE*.

ARE YOU SURE?

WHAT?! HOW ARE YOU *DOING* THAT?

INTER-DECEPTICON RADIO. TOLD KAON TO *HIJACK THE FREQUENCY* BEFORE WE CAME ON BOARD. I CAN TALK TO ALL YOUR TROOPS AT ONCE.

NOW, IS EVERYONE LISTENING...

...OR DO I HAVE TO *LOWER MY VOICE*?

QUESTION: WHEN DID YOU BECOME A DECEPTICON?

I WAS *BUILT* AS A DECEPTICON.

AS I THOUGHT. YOU WEREN'T THERE AT THE *BEGINNING*. YOU WEREN'T THERE TO WATCH THE *DECEPTICONS* GROW—FROM AN *IDEA* TO AN *ARMY*.

VICTORY AFTER VICTORY, DEATHSAURUS. THAT'S WHAT IT WAS BACK THEN: VICTORY AFTER VICTORY. MEGATRON WAS... OH, BUT HE WAS *MAGNIFICENT*.

"OVERTHROWING THE SENATE, EMANCIPATING THE MANIAL CLASSES... *NOTHING* WAS BEYOND HIM.

"TRUE, PRIME'S AUTOBOTS PROVED SOMETHING OF AN *IMPEDIMENT*, BUT BY AND LARGE HE ACHIEVED HIS AIMS... AND ONLY THEN DID HE ALLOW HIMSELF TO LOOK *UPWARDS*... TO CONSIDER HIS PLACE—*OUR* PLACE—IN THE WIDER UNIVERSE.

"HE REALIZED THAT THE *PREJUDICE* AND *INJUSTICE* HE'D RALLIED AGAINST ON CYBERTRON WAS PREVALENT ELSEWHERE—*EVERYWHERE*. IN FACT, THE UNIVERSE WAS ACTIVELY AND IMPLACABLY *ANTI-MECHANICAL*: OF THE FLESH, FOR THE FLESH.

"IT DIDN'T TAKE HIM LONG TO IDENTIFY TENS OF THOUSANDS OF ORGANIC RACES THAT HAD THE POTENTIAL TO DO US HARM. HE SAW IT AS HIS DUTY TO STRIKE THE FIRST BLOW. THE ALTERNATIVE WAS TO DO NOTHING AND INVITE ATTACK.

"IN MOVING TO PROTECT THE ORGANICS, THE AUTOBOTS WERE MOTIVATED ENTIRELY BY A DESIRE TO PUT AN *UPSTART MINER* BACK IN HIS PLACE.

"HAD THEY NOT *INTERFERED*, MEGATRON WOULD LONG AGO HAVE RESOLVED THE TENSION BETWEEN ORGANIC AND INORGANIC RACES BY REMOVING ALL TRACE OF THE FORMER.

AND *THAT*, DEATHSAURUS, IS THE *DECEPTICON CAUSE*: THE ONGOING STRUGGLE TO ELIMINATE *EVERY* THREAT TO CYBERTONIAN HAPPINESS AND PROSPERITY—WHETHER THAT THREAT IS *FOREIGN* OR *DOMESTIC*.

I THOUGHT YOU PLAYED YOUR VICTIMS MUSIC, NOT GAVE THEM HISTORY LESSONS. *UNNECESSARY* ONES, AT THAT.

WHERE'S THIS ALL GOING?

SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY I ALLOWED MYSELF TO THINK THAT MEGATRON WAS BIGGER THAN THE DECEPTICON CAUSE. WHEN I LEARNED THAT HE'D DEFECTED, I WAS READY TO GIVE UP.

I WAS A FOOL. *NO ONE* IS BIGGER THAN THE DECEPTICON CAUSE.

TRUE. MEGATRON WAS THE FIRST TO *ARTICULATE* IT—BUT IT LIVES ON WITHOUT HIM. IT *SINGS*. IT *SOARS*.

AND IT TOOK SOMEONE HEARING IT FOR THE FIRST TIME TO REMIND ME HOW *BEAUTIFUL* IT SOUNDED.

THIS IS NICKEL. SHE'S OUR NEWEST RECRUIT—AND THE LAST OF HER KIND.

SHE'S A *COLONIST*—ONE OF THOUSANDS BORN OF *PRION*, A TITAN WHO LEFT CYBERTRON DURING THE *ANCIENT TIMES*. WE FOUND HER DAYS AFTER AN ATTACK THAT WIPED OUT HER COLONY.

HOW SO?

AN ATTACK? THE AUTOBOTS WOULDN'T—

THE AUTOBOTS *DIDN'T*. IT WAS THE *BLACK BLOCK CONSORTIA*.

THEY KNOW WE'RE VULNERABLE. DEATHSAURUS—THE CONSORTIA *AND* THE GALACTIC COUNCIL.

THEY KNOW OUR RACE IS *REDUCED* AND *SCATTERED* AND THEY'RE COMMITTED TO FINISHING WHAT THEIR ANCESTORS STARTED. THEY WANT TO *ANNIHILATE* US.

AND IN RESPONSE—WHAT? WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU ADVOCATING?

WE DO AS MEGATRON DID. WE FIGHT.

"WE"?

JOIN US.

JOIN US, AND I'LL TAKE YOU OFF *THE LIST*. ALL IS FORGIVEN.

I'D WANT MY TROOPS "CLEARED" AS WELL. IF I JOIN YOU, ***THEY*** JOIN YOU—AND ***EVERYONE'S*** SLATE IS WIPED CLEAN.

YES, YES, THAT WAS ALWAYS MY INTENTION.

IN THAT CASE, I HAVE ONE FURTHER CONDITION. BUT FIRST I NEED YOU TO DISENGAGE FROM THE NETWORK.

WELL? WHAT'S THIS CONDITION?

KILL YOUR TEAM.

YOU MURDERED DOZENS OF MY TROOPS. SEEING THE REST OF YOUR "JUSTICE DIVISION" DIE BY YOUR HAND WOULD GO SOME WAY TOWARDS ***MAKING AMENDS***.

I FIND IT SURPRISINGLY EASY TO SAY—

NO.

I—

NO. THE ANSWER'S NO.

THEN WE HAVE A DEAL.

BUT—

I NEEDED TO GET THE MEASURE OF YOU, TARN. I COULD NEVER THROW MY WEIGHT BEHIND A LEADER WHO TREATED HIS FOOT SOLDIERS LIKE FODDER.

THAT'S WHY MEGATRON AND I PARTED COMPANY.

SO WHAT NOW? THERE'S A GALACTIC COUNCIL FACILITY IN THE NEIGHBORING SECTOR. ONCE WE'RE MOBILE WE COULD FIRE UP THE STAR-BLASTERS AND PAY THEM A VISIT.

FOR A SECOND I WONDER WHAT MEGATRON WOULD WANT US TO DO. AND THEN I REMEMBER: ***EVERYTHING'S CHANGED.***

THE DECEPTICON EMPIRE WILL STAND OR FALL ON THE STRENGTH OF ITS ***INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION***. BEFORE WE ATTACK THE ORGANICS, THERE IS SOME ***HOUSEKEEPING*** TO ATTEND TO.

BY HIS ACTIONS, MEGATRON HAS PUT HIMSELF ON ***THE LIST***.

IN FACT, AS OF RIGHT NOW, HE ***IS*** THE LIST.

WHAT'S MORE—IF THE END OF *TOWARDS PEACE* IS TO BE BELIEVED—HE'S SOMEHOW MANAGED TO ALLY HIMSELF WITH A SHIPFUL OF AUTOBOTS I THOUGHT WE'D ELIMINATED.

BEFORE WE DO ANYTHING ELSE, WE'RE GOING TO FIND THEM—ALL OF THEM—AND WE'RE GOING TO KILL THEM—***PROPERLY***, THIS TIME.

SO GATHER YOUR TROOPS, CHARGE YOUR WEAPONS, AND LET US REPAIR TO THE *PEACEFUL TYRANNY*.

INDEED! LET BATTLE BE JOINED, EH?

OH, THIS IS MORE THAN A BATTLE. DEATHSAURUS...

WE'RE GOING TO WAR.

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #40 COVER A

by **ALEX MILNE** Colors by **JOSH PEREZ**

PREVIOUSLY

HAVE WE MET? BECAUSE I COULD'VE SWORN—

YOU LOOK ***REALLY*** SIMILAR TO THIS OTHER GUY, IN HERE ALL THE TIME, ALWAYS PLAYING ***CATCH UP***, ALWAYS ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS, THAT AND THE OTHER, LIKE HE THINKS I'M HIS PERSONAL ***TIVO***.

TIVO? OH, SORRY, IT'S AN EARTH DEVICE USED TO RECORD TV PROGRAMS.

EARTH? IT'S PLANET IN THE T3 SYSTEM—THE ONLY PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE WHERE THEY STILL RECORD SITCOMS IN FRONT OF A LIVE STUDIO AUDIENCE.

SITCOMS? SITUATION COMEDIES, 22 MINUTES LONG, AND THE MOST PERFECT FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT SINCE—

ACTUALLY, LOOK, I'M SORRY, BUT THERE'S A QUEUE BEHIND YOU AND WHIRL'S GIVING ME THE EVIL EYE.

NO, NO, I DON'T MIND CHATTING WHILE I GET YOU A...?

PINT OF PETROLEX. GOT IT.

SO YEAH, IN TERMS OF WHAT YOU'VE MISSED... I'VE MISSED IT TOO. THEY'VE TAKEN ME OFF THEIR ***ADVENTURE LIST***. I KNOW! I'M NOT EVEN IN THE ***RESERVES!***

TIME WAS, WHENEVER IT WAS HITTING THE FAN I'D BE IN THERE, SLAP BANG IN THE THICK OF IT, DEALING OUT THE QUIPS, MAKING LIGHT OF THE SITUATION, GETTING ALL THE LAUGHS...

~SIGH~

ANYWAY, DON'T TELL ***ANYONE*** THIS UNLESS YOU WANT TO, BUT ***RUMOR*** HAS IT THAT A FEW DAYS AGO, RODIMUS AND HIS NEW FAVORITES FOUND A ***TIME MACHINE*** IN BRAINSTORM'S—WELL, IN BRAINSTORM'S BRIEFCASE, ESSENTIALLY.

AND—*SH-SH-SH!*—AND TO STOP THE ***END OF EVERYTHING*** EVER THEY HAD TO LIKE CHASE BRAINSTORM THROUGH TIME AND SPACE AND STOP HIM KILLING MEGATRON.

NO, NO, STRAIGHT UP! THEY HAD TO ***MARTY McFLY*** IT BACK TO PRE-WAR CYBERTRON!

...

SO... YOU'RE NOT FAMILIAR WITH ***ANY*** EARTH CULTURE?

First unsuccessful attempt...

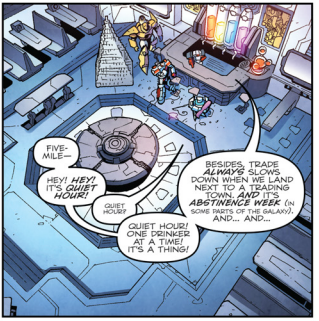
Second unsuccessful attempt...

Third unsuccessful attempt...

FIFTY MILES OUTSIDE FORTUNA (CAPITAL OF SCARVIX).
OUTTA THE WAY, GUYS!
RECHARGING QUANTUM ENGINES
77%
HEY! I'M WALKIN' HERE!
TAILGATE!
–NEARLY TOOK MY HEAD OFF!
SORRY! DOOSH CORRIDOR!
A LITTLE TO THE LEFT... A LITTLE BIT MORE...
SWERVE'S.
KEEP ME STEADY, YOU BIG LUG!
BONK
TEN?
LOOK OUT!

WRUNCH
UFF!

SHOUTING "LOOK OUT!" DOESN'T RELIEVE YOU OF YOUR OBLIGATION TO STEER, TAILGATE...
IT'S THIS SHIP! OUTSIDE I WAS FINE, BUT INSIDE... THE LAYOUT'S ALL WRONG! I MIGHT ASK RODIMUS IF WE CAN HAVE NEW CORRIDORS.
...
I'M SORRY, DOC. THE ONLY CUSTOMER IN A FIVE-MILE RADIUS AND I MANAGE TO SPILL HIS DRINK.


FIVE-MILE—
HEY! HEY! IT'S QUIET HOUR!
QUIET HOUR?
QUIET HOUR! ONE DRINKER AT A TIME! IT'S A THING!
BESIDES, TRADE ALWAYS SLOWS DOWN WHEN WE LAND NEXT TO A TRADING TOWN, AND IT'S ABSTINENCE WEEK (IN SOME PARTS OF THE GALAXY). AND... AND...

POW!
I'M IN BIG TROUBLE.

EVER SINCE THE INCIDENT LAST WEEK—
WHEN YOU NEARLY KILLED EVERYONE BY SERVING THEM BAD ENGEX?
YES, TAILGATE, YES. THE INCIDENT. EVER SINCE THEN, HALF THE PUNTERS HAVE STAYED AWAY.
AND HAVE YOU SEEN THE NEW INGREDIENT
MIRAGE PUNT

MIRAGE HAS OPENED A BAR?
"VISAGES". THE QUOTATION MARKS COME WITH IT.
"SAMPLE A RANGE OF IMPORTED FUELS IN A TOP-DECK HIDEAWAY THAT'S ALREADY BECOME A BWOOD FOR POST-WAR RELAXATION."

I HATE IT (MUFFLED) EVERYTHING ABOUT IT. IT SOUNDS (MUFFLED) AWFUL.
IT SOUNDS FUN...!
MIRAGE PUNT

WHAT ABOUT BEING *BARRED FOR LIFE?* DOES *THAT* SOUND FUN?
ONE LAST ORDER BEFORE I'M EXILED: SIX CANISTERS OF PETROLEX *TO GO*. GETAWAY'S TAKING ME FISHING!
FISHING?
IN THE *OIL RESERVOIR!*
FISHING?
FOR BODY PARTS! HE REKONS THESE MUST BE FORTY, FIFTY *LEGISLATORS* DOWN THERE.
IT'S A GAME: 50 POINTS FOR A HEAD, 30 POINTS FOR A HAND...

TAILGATE! PRESENT COMPANY...
EH?
OH! SORRY, TEN.
GOD, DON'T MIND *HIM*. HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON HALF THE—

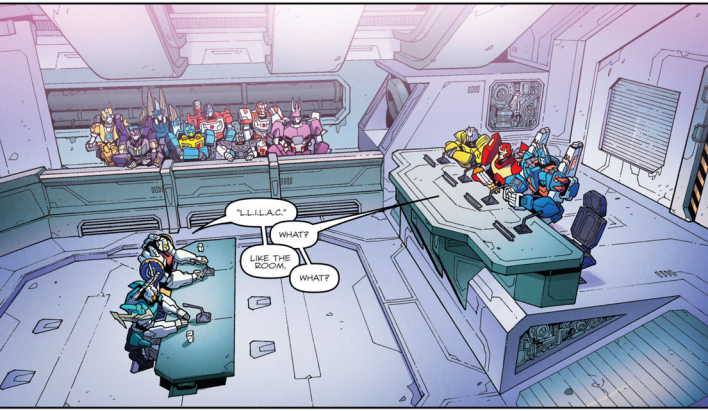
HEY! OFF THE STOOL! CUSTOMERS ONLY!

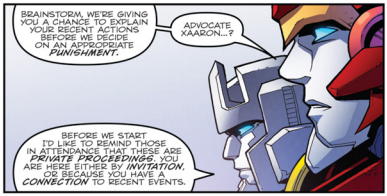
"I FAILED THE AMBUS TEST"
"I FAILED THE..." WHAT DOES IT SAY? "I FAILED THE AMBUS TEST". DID *NUTJOB* WRITE THAT?
YOU KNOW, SOME PEOPLE ARGUE THAT THE AMBUS TEST SETS THE *SENTIENCE THRESHOLD* TOO HIGH. THEY SAY THAT IF IT WERE STRICTLY APPLIED, THE LIKES OF RAVAGE WOULD BE CLASSED AS AN *AUTOMATON*.
YOU SOUND LIKE *ULTRA MAGNUS*.
FIVE WORDS ONE NEVER WANTS TO HEAR...

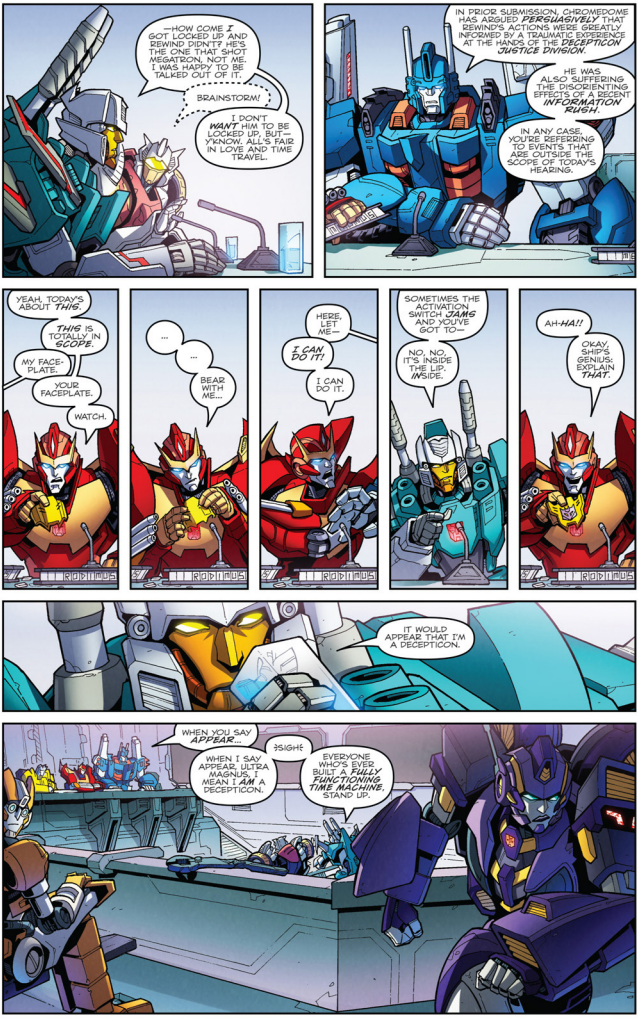
HE WAS IN HERE EARLIER, LOOKING FOR A *DATAPAD* AND LECTURING ME ABOUT *WORKERS' RIGHTS*.
"YOU SHOULD GIVE TEN SOME TIME OFF, PATCH HIM UP, TALK TO HIM, CHANGE HIS OIL..."
DAMMIT.
S'OKAY, YOU DON'T *REALLY* SOUND LIKE HIM. AND YOU ARE *MARGINALLY* MORE CHEERFUL...

I'M *LATE*. I'M SUPPOSED TO *BE* SOMEWHERE...

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER RATCHET in:
"OUR STEPS WILL ALWAYS RHYME"






—HOW COME I GOT LOCKED UP AND REWIND DIDN'T? HE'S THE ONE THAT SHOT MEGATRON, NOT ME. I WAS HAPPY TO BE TALKED OUT OF IT.
BRAINSTORM!
I DON'T WANT HIM TO BE LOCKED UP, BUT—Y'KNOW. ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND TIME TRAVEL.
IN PRIOR SUBMISSION, CHROMEDOME HAS ARGUED PERSUASIVELY THAT REWIND'S ACTIONS WERE GREATLY INFORMED BY A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE AT THE HANDS OF THE DECEPTICON JUSTICE DIVISION.
HE WAS ALSO SUFFERING THE DISORIENTING EFFECTS OF A RECENT INFORMATION RUSH.
IN ANY CASE, YOU'RE REFERRING TO EVENTS THAT ARE OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF TODAY'S HEARING.
YEAH, TODAY'S ABOUT THIS.
THIS IS TOTALLY IN SCOPE.
MY FACE-PLATE.
YOUR FACEPLATE.
WATCH.
...
...
BEAR WITH ME...
HERE, LET ME—
I CAN DO IT!
I CAN DO IT.
SOMETIMES THE ACTIVATION SWITCH JAMS AND YOU'VE GOT TO—
NO, NO, IT'S INSIDE THE LIP. INSIDE.
AH-HA!!
OKAY, SHIP'S GENIUS: EXPLAIN THAT.
IT WOULD APPEAR THAT I'M A DECEPTICON.
WHEN YOU SAY APPEAR...
WHEN I SAY APPEAR, ULTRA MAGNUS, I MEAN I AM A DECEPTICON.
SIGH!
EVERYONE WHO'S EVER BUILT A FULLY FUNCTIONING TIME MACHINE, STAND UP.

UNSURPRISING FACT NUMBER 1: BUILDING A TIME MACHINE IS HARD.

YOU SPEND FOREVER ON THE THEORY, THEN YOU SPEND FOREVER DESIGNING IT, THEN YOU SPEND FOREVER TRYING TO SOURCE THE MATERIALS YOU NEED TO BUILD IT.

UNFORTUNATELY, MOST OF THOSE MATERIALS SEEM TO BE IN THE HANDS OF THE DECEPTICONS. I DUNNO WHY, MUST BE ALL THE PILLAGING.

THE ONLY WAY I COULD GET MY HANDS ON SOME OF THIS STUFF WAS TO COMMIT SWITCH SIDES, SIGN UP, THE WHOLE HOG.

TO PROVE MY DEDICATION TO THE CAUSE I HAD TO SUPPLY MY HANDLER WITH SECRETS—AUTOBOT WEAPONS TECH.

NOTHING SERIOUS—INFORMATION THEY THOUGHT WAS NEW, BUT INFORMATION THEY ALREADY HAD. IT'S ALL ABOUT HOW YOU PACKAGE IT.

BRAINSTORM NEVER SUPPLIED THE DECEPTICONS WITH INFORMATION THAT COULD BE USED AGAINST THE AUTOBOTS.

OH LOOK. SKEPTICAL MODE.

WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS SOMEWHAT HARD TO BELIEVE GIVEN THAT THE OTHER YOU—

—THE BRAINSTORM THAT MEGATRON FOUND ON THE DUPLICATE LOST LIGHT—

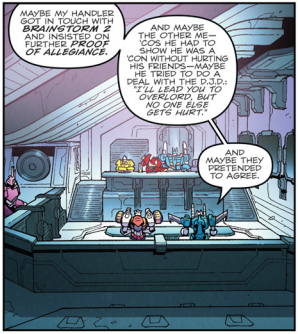
—TOLD THE D.I.D. ABOUT OVERLORD AND, IN SO DOING, CONDEMNED THE CREW TO DEATH.

ABOUT THAT. I KNOW I'D NEVER DO ANYTHING TO HURT YOU GUYS—A SPOT OF LIGHT POISONING ASIDE—SO I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THIS, AND...

THE DECEPTICONS HAVE HAD THEIR SUSPICIONS ABOUT ME FOR AGES.

I'M THE WORST DOUBLE AGENT EVER.

WORSE THAN RUNG.



NO. MY FINAL WORD ON THE SUBJECT IS THIS:

I DIDN'T TELL THE D.J.D. ABOUT OVERLORD. SOME OTHER VERSION OF ME DID—SOME IDIOT VERSION—AND HE'S DEAD.

I'M NOT.

RIGHT NOW I KINDA WISH I WAS. BUT NO, I'M HERE, PRETENDING TO FIND THIS FUNNY BECAUSE YOU'RE INTIMIDATING ME AND I HATE YOU FOR IT.

I DID SOME AMAZING THINGS THAT WERE ALSO AMAZINGLY DUMB, AND AS A MEANS TO AN END I BECAME A VERY INEFFECTUAL DECEPTICON.

BUT DON'T YOU DARE BLAME ME FOR WHAT HAPPENED ON THE OTHER LOST LIGHT.

DON'T YOU DARE TRY TO PIN THAT ON ME.

THE COMMITTEE HAS REACHED A DECISION.

BRAINSTORM, THE PRECISE NATURE OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE D.J.D.'S ATTACK ON THE OTHER *LOST LIGHT* WILL FOREVER REMAIN ***UNCLEAR***—

—AND IN ANY CASE, YOU CANNOT BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE ACTIONS CARRIED OUT BY SOMEONE ELSE—EVEN IF THAT "SOMEONE ELSE," TECHNICALLY, WAS YOU.

AS FOR YOUR ***FACTION***... I'M CONSCIOUS THAT WE ALREADY HAVE A DECEPTICON ON BOARD...

...AS WELL AS A VERY PROMINENT ***EX***-DECEPTICON.

NOW THAT THE WAR IS OVER, ONE'S ALLEGIANCE MATTERS LESS THAN ONE'S ***ACTIONS***, AND THAT'S WHERE WE HAVE A PROBLEM.

YOU POISONED THE CREW, BRAINSTORM. YOU ATTACKED US, YOU KEPT SECRETS FROM US, AND YOU DECIDED—***UNILATERALLY***—THAT YOU WOULD ALTER THE COURSE OF HISTORY.

THAT DEMANDS A RESPONSE, RODIMUS?

MEGATRON

AT 3700 HOURS THE TIME MACHINE—YOUR LIFE'S WORK—WILL BE ***DESTROYED***, AND UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE YOU'LL ONLY BE ALLOWED ACCESS TO YOUR WORKSHOP UNDER ***STRICT SUPERVISION***.

YOU WILL ALSO BE EXPECTED TO SEVER TIES WITH YOUR HANDLER—AGAIN, UNDER SUPERVISION.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WANT TO SAY?

YOU'RE NOT KICKING ME OFF THE SHIP?

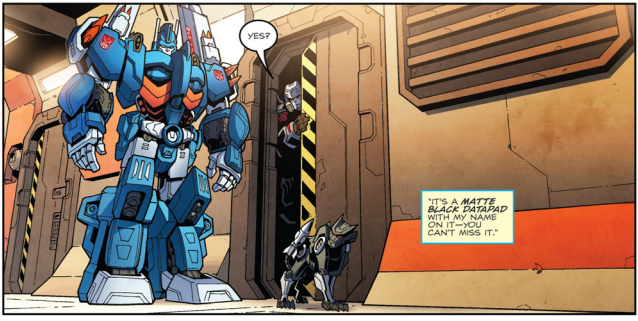
NO, CAPTAIN.

WOULD YOU LIKE US TO KICK YOU OFF?

I WOULDN'T.

THIS IS MY HOME.

LATER.
MEGATRON!
MEGATRON!
I KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE!
KLIK


YES?
"IT'S A *MATTE BLACK* DATAPAD WITH MY NAME ON IT—YOU CAN'T MISS IT."

WELL, I'M AFRAID I DON'T HAVE IT. I'VE NOT EVEN SEEN IT.
SOMEONE HAS IT. SOMEONE'S *TAKEN* IT.
AND YOU'RE THE OBVIOUS SUSPECT.
GO AHEAD—SEARCH MY QUARTERS. IT WON'T TAKE YOU LONG.

YOU'VE HARDLY LEFT YOUR ROOM SINCE THEY BROUGHT BRAINSTORM BACK.
WHAT ARE YOU *DOING* IN HERE?

THINKING.
WORKING.

"Visages"

AND *THEN* I SAID, WHY DON'T YOU JUST USE THE TIME PHONE TO CALL HOME AND STOP THE LAUNCH?

AND *RODIMUS*—HIS JAW IS ON THE *FLOOR*.

HE'S LOOKING AT EVERYONE AND GOING, "I'M THE *LEADER*—WHY DIDN'T *I* THINK OF THAT?!"

AND *CYCLONUS* KNOWS THIS? YOUR HEROICS. HE KNOWS ABOUT ALL THAT?

WELL, HE WAS *THERE*, SO...

WHY?

NOTHING. I SHOULDN'T—

WHAT? SHOULDN'T WHAT?

SO ANYWAY, I'M THINKING MAYBE NEXT TIME WE SHOULD ASK *RIPTIDE* TO TAKE US *ONTO* THE RESERVOIR SO WE CAN—

GETAWAY. WHAT WERE YOU GOING TO SAY?

YOU KNOW HOW CYCLONUS SOMETIMES FINDS YOU A BIT EMBARRASSING...?

EMBARRASSING?

WELL, THE OTHER DAY I WAS *THIG* CLOSE TO SAYING SOMETHING—BECAUSE YOU'RE *NOT* "SIMPLE-MINDED", AND I KNOW FOR A *FACT* YOU'RE NOT A COWARD.

WHEN DID HE SAY I WAS A COWARD?

THE OTHER DAY. HE WAS TELLING ME ABOUT THE TIME YOU WERE ON YOUR *DEATHBED*. I SAID FOR PITY'S SAKE—I'D HAVE BEEN A "WHIMPERING MESS," TOO...!

HE PROMISED ME HE WOULDN'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT THAT...

YOU AND ME, SCOUT—WE'RE NOT *WARRIORS*.

CYCLONUS *IS*. HE JUDGES PEOPLE DIFFERENTLY. HE CAN'T HELP IT.

BUT—THE *KILLSWITCH! I SAVED* EVERYBODY!

AND FOR MOST PEOPLE THAT WOULD BE ENOUGH. CYCLONUS... HE EXPECTS *WAY* TOO MUCH, AND IF YOU KEEP *DISAPPOINTING* HIM, I'M SORRY, BUT THAT'S ENTIRELY HIS PROBLEM.

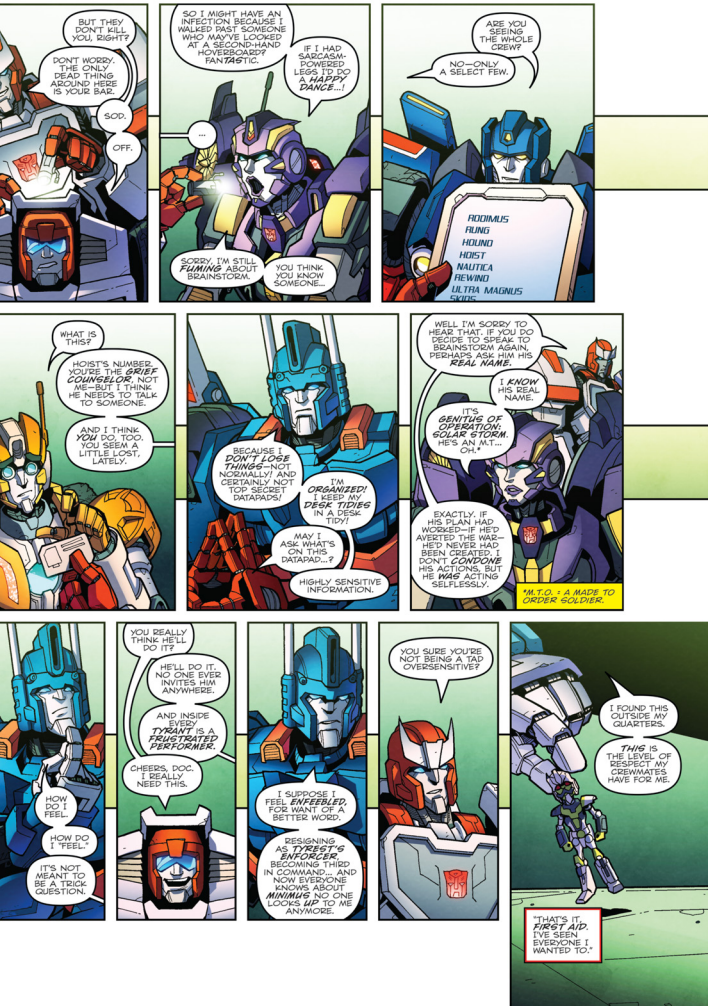
I DON'T WANT ANYMORE. MY HEAD HURTS.

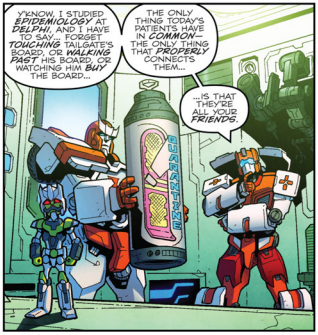
A DRINK. WILL HELP. AND LISTEN—MAYBE DON'T TELL CYCLONUS I SAID ANYTHING. HE'D LITERALLY KILL ME.

SORRY, TAILGATE—

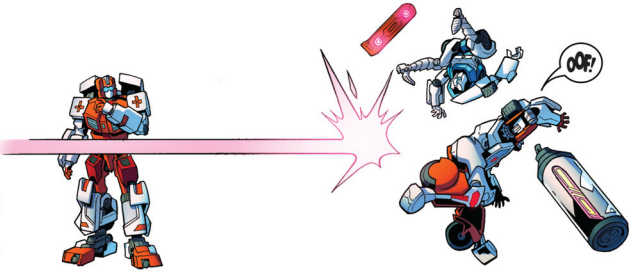
—BUT I NEED TO BORROW THIS.

THE MEDIBAY.
I'VE SEEN THE BOARD. I'VE *HEARD* THE BOARD.
BUT I'VE NEVER *TOUCHED* THE BOARD...
QUARANTINE
...SO WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I MIGHT BE *INFECTED?* WHY THE CHECK UP?
YOU WERE IN FORTUNA WITH TAILGATE WHEN HE BOUGHT THE BOARD.
WITH *SUPER-SCRAPLETS*, IT'S NOT PHYSICAL CONTACT THAT MATTERS, IT'S PROXIMITY.
SUPER-SCRAPLETS? WHAT MAKES THEM SUPER?
THEY CAN *TELEPORT*. YOU CAN BE STANDING NEXT TO AN INFECTED PERSON OR OBJECT, AND VOP! THEY'RE INSIDE YOU.
AFTER *THAT*... OUCH.
CAN THIS WAIT?
ONLY I'VE MISPLACED SOMETHING RATHER *IMPORTANT*...
THIS IS IMPORTANT, MAGNUS. FIVE MINUTES OF YOUR TIME. THAT'S ALL I NEED. FIVE MINUTES FOR A CHECK-UP—
—AND A *CHAT*.
WHAT D'YOU MEAN "INCONSISTENT"?
TWO AUTOBOTS CONFESS TO CRIMES. ONE GETS PUBLICLY HUMILIATED AND *EXILED*. THE OTHER GETS A PRIVATE *SLAP ON THE WRIST*.
THAT'S INCONSISTENT TREATMENT, IT IS.
I'M SORRY, RODIMUS, IT *IS*!
YOU THINK WE WERE TOO SOFT ON *BRAINSTORM?*
NO, I THINK YOU WERE TOO HARD ON *DRIFT*. I'VE *ALWAYS* THOUGHT YOU WERE TOO HARD ON HIM.
BUT THE COMMITTEE HEARING... THAT WAS THE FINAL STRAW.
YOU'RE CLEAN—NO SCRAPLETS, SUPER OR OTHERWISE, BUT YOU SHOULD GET *FIRST AID* TO FIX THOSE PUNCTURE WOUNDS ON YOUR NECK, AND MAYBE PAY RUNG A VISIT.
EYEBROWS? WHY?
NO REASON—AND THAT'S WHY HELL *APPRECIATE IT*.
THE ONLY TIME PEOPLE REALLY *TALK* TO HIM IS WHEN THEY'RE SICK—AND I KNOW HOW THAT FEELS.

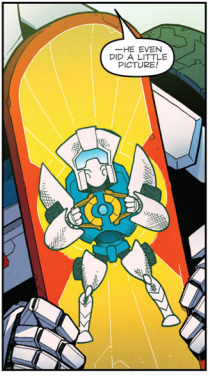

BUT THEY DON'T KILL YOU, RIGHT?
DON'T WORRY. THE ONLY DEAD THING AROUND HERE IS YOUR BAR.
SOD.
OFF.
SO I MIGHT HAVE AN INFECTION BECAUSE I WALKED PAST SOMEONE WHO MAY'VE LOOKED AT A SECOND-HAND HOVERBOARD FANTASTIC.
IF I HAD SARCASM-POWERED LEGS I'D DO A HAPPY DANCE...!
...
SORRY, I'M STILL FUMING ABOUT BRAINSTORM.
YOU THINK YOU KNOW SOMEONE...
ARE YOU SEEING THE WHOLE CREW?
NO—ONLY A SELECT FEW.
ROOIMUS
RUNG
HOUND
HOIST
NAUTICA
REWIND
ULTRA MAGNUS
SKIDS
WHAT IS THIS?
HOIST'S NUMBER. YOU'RE THE GRIEF COUNSELOR, NOT ME—BUT I THINK HE NEEDS TO TALK TO SOMEONE.
AND I THINK YOU DO, TOO. YOU SEEM A LITTLE LOST, LATELY.
BECAUSE I DON'T LOSE THINGS—NOT NORMALLY! AND CERTAINLY NOT TOP SECRET DATAPADS!
I'M ORGANIZED! I KEEP MY DESK TIDIES IN A DESK TIDY!
MAY I ASK WHAT'S ON THIS DATAPAD...?
HIGHLY SENSITIVE INFORMATION.
WELL, I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT. IF YOU DO DECIDE TO SPEAK TO BRAINSTORM AGAIN, PERHAPS ASK HIM HIS REAL NAME.
I KNOW HIS REAL NAME.
IT'S GENITUS OF OPERATION: SOLAR STORM. HE'S AN M.T.... OH.*
EXACTLY. IF HIS PLAN HAD WORKED—IF HE'D AVERTED THE WAR—HE'D NEVER HAD BEEN CREATED. I DON'T CONFUSE HIS ACTIONS, BUT HE WAS ACTING SELFLESSLY.
*M.T.O. = A MADE TO ORDER SOLDIER.
HOW DO I FEEL.
HOW DO I "FEEL."
IT'S NOT MEANT TO BE A TRICK QUESTION.
YOU REALLY THINK HE'LL DO IT?
HE'LL DO IT. NO ONE EVER INVITES HIM ANYWHERE.
AND INSIDE EVERY TYRANT IS A FRUSTRATED PERFORMER.
CHEERS, DOC. I REALLY NEED THIS.
I SUPPOSE I FEEL ENFEEBLED, FOR WANT OF A BETTER WORD.
RESIGNING AS TYREST'G ENFORCER, BECOMING THIRD IN COMMAND... AND NOW EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT MINIMUS! NO ONE LOOKS UP TO ME ANYMORE.
YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT BEING A TAD OVERSENSITIVE?
I FOUND THIS OUTSIDE MY QUARTERS.
THIS IS THE LEVEL OF RESPECT MY CREWMATES HAVE FOR ME.
"THAT'S IT. FIRST AID, I'VE SEEN EVERYONE I WANTED TO."


Y'KNOW, I STUDIED *EPIDEMIOLOGY* AT *DELPHI*, AND I HAVE TO SAY... FORGET *TOUCHING* TAILGATE'S BOARD, OR *WALKING PAST* HIS BOARD, OR WATCHING HIM *BUY* THE BOARD...
THE ONLY THING TODAY'S PATIENTS HAVE IN *COMMON*— THE ONLY THING THAT *PROPERLY* CONNECTS THEM...
...IS THAT THEY'RE ALL YOUR *FRIENDS*.
SURGICAL

YES. WELL.
THE MAIN THING IS: NO TRACE OF ANY SUPER SCRAPLETS.
AND THAT'S ANOTHER THING. "*SUPER*-SCRAPLETS"? *REALLY*?
WHAT ARE YOU SUGGESTING?
I'M SUGGESTING THERE ARE MUCH *SIMPLER* WAYS—MUCH MORE OVERT WAYS—OF DOING WHAT I THINK YOU'VE JUST DONE. YOU COULDVE ASKED THEM TO MEET YOU IN THE *SHUTTLE BAY* AND SAID—
LOOK OUT!


OOF!

HEY, KID. THANKS.
KEEP IT. I'VE GOT A NEW ONE NOW!
HOW'S THAT?
TEN MADE IT FOR ME. HE'S A REAL CRAFTSMAN—*AND* HE'S REALLY CREATIVE.
LOOK—


—HE EVEN DID A LITTLE PICTURE!

DID HE NOW...

NOK NOK
HELLO?
ANYONE IN THERE?

TEN?
KAY, SO I GUESS SWERVE WASN'T JOKING...

SO THIS IS TEN'S DEN?
I'M STILL GETTING A BOILER ROOM VIBE...

—BUT YOU'VE CERTAINLY MADE YOUR MARK.

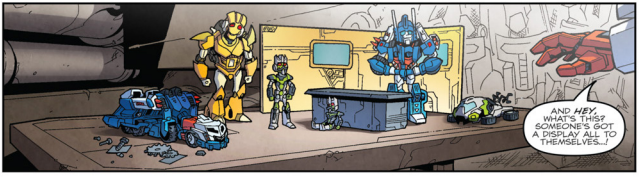
WOW.
WOW.
DID YOU DRAW THIS?
TEN.
WOW.

AND YOU MADE ALL THIS...

ARE THESE YOUR FAVORITES?
TEN.

YEAH.
MINE, TOO.

YOU'RE MISSING SOMEONE, THOUGH. NOT YOUR FAULT; YOU JOINED AFTER HE LEFT, AFTER WE SENT HIM AWAY.
YOU'D HAVE LIKED HIM. I DID—PROBABLY A LOT MORE THAN EITHER OF US REALIZED.
STILL, IF ALL GOES TO PLAN YOU'LL GET TO MEET HIM SOON ENOUGH.


AND HEY, WHAT'S THIS? SOMEONE'S GOT A DISPLAY ALL TO THEMSELVES...!

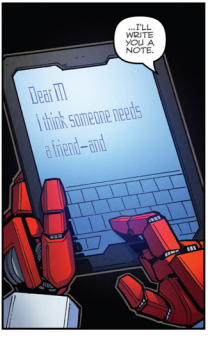
YOU LIKE ULTRA MAGNUS?
ULTRA MAGNUS IS YOUR FRIEND?
TEN TEN TEN TEN

AH. THERE IT IS.

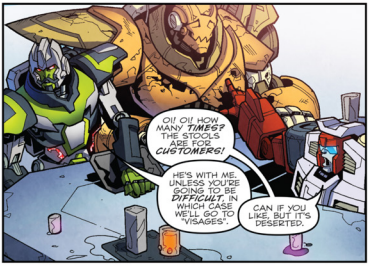
THIS IS THE EXTREMELY PERSONAL PROPERTY OF ULTRA MAGNUS, EX-DULY APPOINTED ENFORCER OF THE TYREST ACCORD
YOU THOUGHT YOU'D DO A SECRET SWAPP SOMETHING OF HIS FOR SOMETHING OF YOURS?

"LAYERG', BY MINIMUS AMBUS.
OH, MAGNUS. YOU DARK HORSE.

I THINK ULTRA MAGNUS IS LOOKING FOR THIS. I THINK HE'D BE VERY HAPPY IF YOU GAVE IT BACK TO HIM.
DON'T WORRY...


...I'LL WRITE YOU A NOTE.
Dear M
I think someone needs a friend—and

LATER.


OI! OI! HOW MANY TIMES? THE STOOLS ARE FOR CUSTOMERS!
HE'S WITH ME. GUESS YOU'RE GOING TO BE DIFFICULT, IN WHICH CASE WE'LL GO TO "VISAGES".
CAN IF YOU LIKE, BUT IT'S DESEITED.

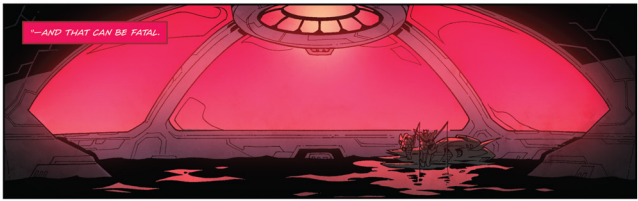
MEGATRON TURNED UP TO GIVE A POETRY READING. CAN YOU BELIEVE. PRIMUS KNOWS WHO INVITED HIM—
—BUT EVERYONE CLEARED OFF BEFORE THE SECOND VERSE. CAN'T BLAME 'EM—WHO WANTS TO GO TO A BAR IF MEGATRON MIGHT BE THERE?
'COURSE IT MAY HAVE BEEN THE POETRY...

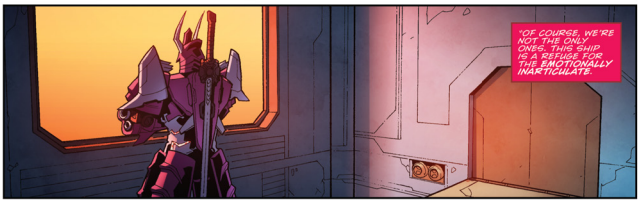
I DON'T TRUST POETRY. WHAT'S THE POINT? ALL THESE PEOPLE TRYING TO SAY SOMETHING BY HIDING IT BEHIND SOMETHING ELSE.
SOMEONE ONCE SAID THAT POETRY IS A HAZARDOUS ATTEMPT AT SELF-UNDERSTANDING.
IT'S CERTAINLY DIFFICULT...

HEY, HAVE YOU SEEN RATCHET? I OWE HIM A FREE DRINK. A BIG ONE, THIS TIME.
I'VE NOT SEEN HIM SINCE MY CHECK-UP. HE LEFT A MESSAGE ON MY DATAPAD—ALTHOUGH IT WAS A LITTLE ODD...
OH? WHAT DID IT SAY?

"TEN."*
*TRANSLATION: "DEAR M– I THINK SOMEONE NEEDS A FRIEND–AND YOU COULD DO WORSE THAN TEN. HE'S YOUR NUMBER 1 FAN."

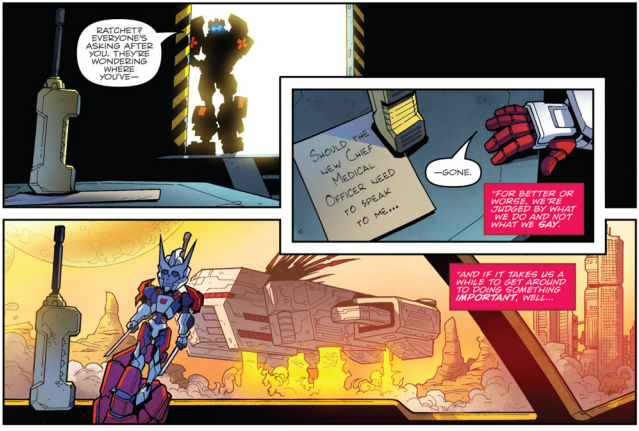
I ADDED A NEW BUTTON:
BRAINSTORM IS AN ASS!
IT'S MY NEW FAVORITE.
"HE AND I HAVE A LOT IN COMMON, ACTUALLY. WE'RE GOOD WITH OUR HANDS BUT NOT WITH OUR WORDS—

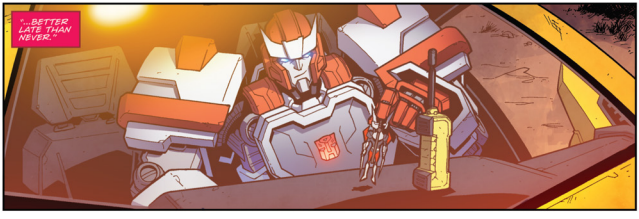

"—AND THAT CAN BE FATAL.

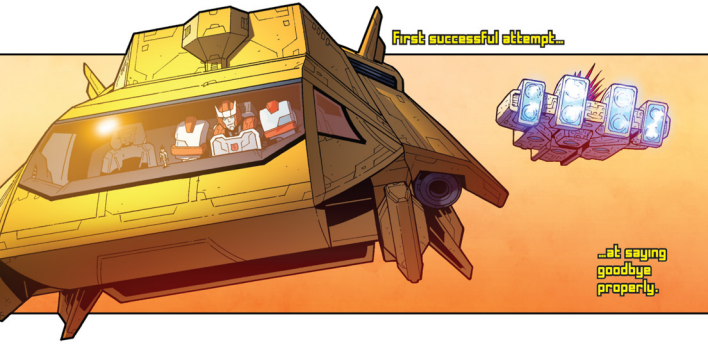

"OF COURSE, WE'RE NOT THE ONLY ONES. THIS SHIP IS A REFUGE FOR THE EMOTIONALLY INARTICULATE.

"OH, PEOPLE TALK. PEOPLE TALK ALL THE TIME. THEY JUST DON'T SAY VERY MUCH."
THAT EVERYTHING?
EVERY LAST PIECE.
"THEY'RE TOO WORRIED ABOUT PEOPLE KNOWING HOW THEY FEEL.

"TOO WORRIED ABOUT BEING FOUND OUT."


RATCHET? EVERYONE'S ASKING AFTER YOU. THEY'RE WONDERING WHERE YOU'VE—
SHOULD THE NEW CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER NEED TO SPEAK TO ME...
—GONE.
"FOR BETTER OR WORSE, WE'RE JUDGED BY WHAT WE DO AND NOT WHAT WE SAY.
"AND IF IT TAKES US A WHILE TO GET AROUND TO DOING SOMETHING IMPORTANT, WELL...


"...BETTER LATE THAN NEVER."


First successful attempt...
...at saying goodbye properly.

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #41 COVER A

by **ALEX MILNE** Colors by **JOSH PEREZ**

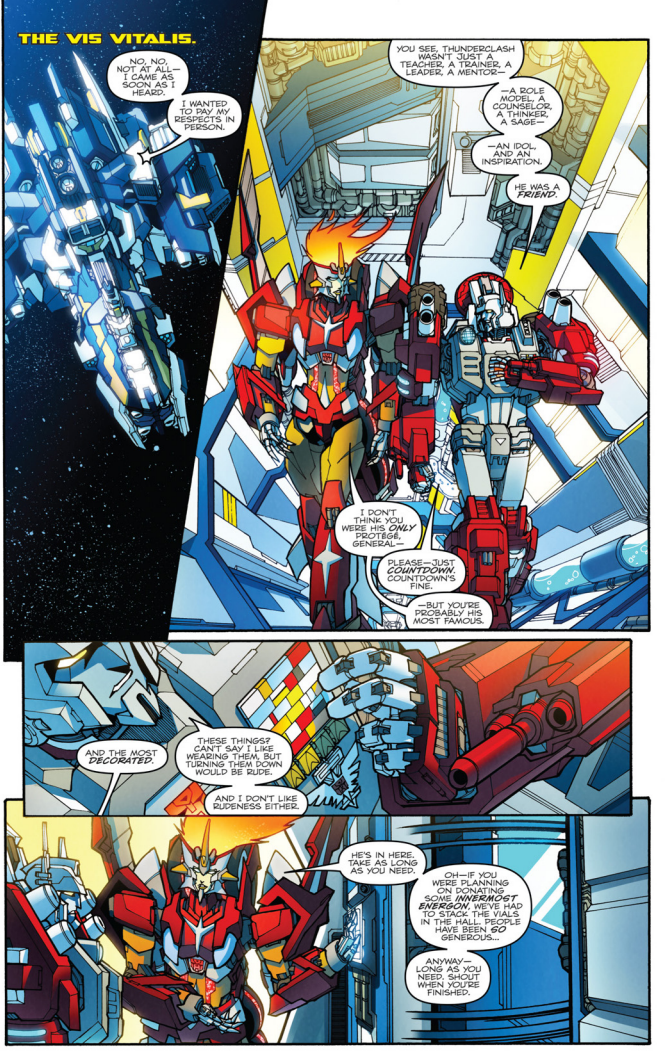
Be near me when my light is low,
When the blood creeps, and the nerves prick
And tingle; and the heart is sick,
And all the wheels of Being slow.

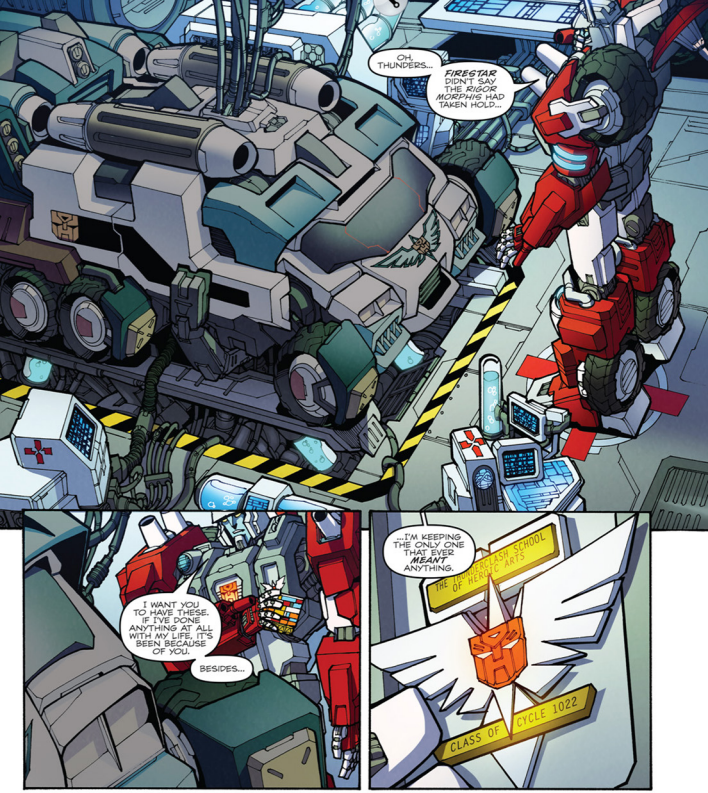
Be near me when the sensuous frame
Is rack'd with pangs that conquer trust;
And Time, a maniac scattering dust,
And Life, a fury slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
And men the flies of latter spring,
That lay their eggs, and sting and sing
And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,
To point the term of human strife,
And on the low dark verge of life
The twilight of eternal day.

— *In Memoriam*
Alfred, Lord Tennyson


THE VIS VITALIS.
NO, NO, NOT AT ALL— I CAME AS SOON AS I HEARD.
I WANTED TO PAY MY RESPECTS IN PERSON.
YOU SEE, THUNDERCLASH WASN'T JUST A TEACHER, A TRAINER, A LEADER, A MENTOR—
—A ROLE MODEL, A COUNSELOR, A THINKER, A SAGE—
—AN IDOL, AND AN INSPIRATION.
HE WAS A FRIEND.
I DON'T THINK YOU WERE HIS ONLY PROTÉGÉ, GENERAL—
PLEASE—JUST COUNTDOWN. COUNTDOWN'S FINE.
—BUT YOU'RE PROBABLY HIS MOST FAMOUS.
AND THE MOST DECORATED.
THESE THINGS? CAN'T SAY I LIKE WEARING THEM, BUT TURNING THEM DOWN WOULD BE RUDE.
AND I DON'T LIKE RUDENESS EITHER.
HE'S IN HERE. TAKE AS LONG AS YOU NEED.
OH—IF YOU WERE PLANNING ON DONATING SOME INNERMOST ENERGON, WE'VE HAD TO STACK THE VIALS IN THE HALL. PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SO GENEROUS...
ANYWAY—LONG AS YOU NEED. SHOUT WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED.


OH, THUNDERS...
FIREGTAR DIDN'T SAY THE RIGOR MORPHIS HAD TAKEN HOLD...
I WANT YOU TO HAVE THESE. IF I'VE DONE ANYTHING AT ALL WITH MY LIFE, IT'S BEEN BECAUSE OF YOU.
BESIDES...
...I'M KEEPING THE ONLY ONE THAT EVER MEANT ANYTHING.
THE UNIVERSAL ACADEMY OF HEROIC ARTS
CLASS OF CYCLE 1022
KNOCK KNOCK
EH?
WHAT IN THE—

"—AAAARRRRGGGGHHHH!"

THE LOST LIGHT.

NAUTICA!

AT WHAT POINT IN THE LAST HOUR—IN BETWEEN US BARGING INTO YOUR ROOM AND NOW—

AT WHAT *EXACT* POINT DID THAT *DATAPAD* BECOME MORE INTERESTING THAN MY—

THAN YOUR WHAT?

THAN YOUR SHOWING OFF?

THAN MY *LESSON!* YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO EXTEND YOUR RANGE OF PRACTICAL SKILLS. "LESS THINKING, MORE DOING," YOU SAID. "SWITCH OFF, HANDS ON."

The Sensuous Frame

I DIDN'T SAY *THAT*. I DIDN'T—

WHO EVEN *SPEAKS* LIKE THAT?

AND I *CERTAINLY* DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT *HANGING UPSIDE DOWN*. THAT IS A REDUNDANT LIFE SKILL.

NO SUCH THING.

APART FROM *SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING*, AND EVEN THAT MIGHT COME IN HANDY ONE DAY.

WHY IS EVERYONE BEING SILLY TODAY?

BRAINSTORM'S HANGING UPSIDE DOWN. YOU'RE JUGGLING. GETAWAY'S... IN CHAINS...

IT'S LIKE BEING IN A CIRCUS.

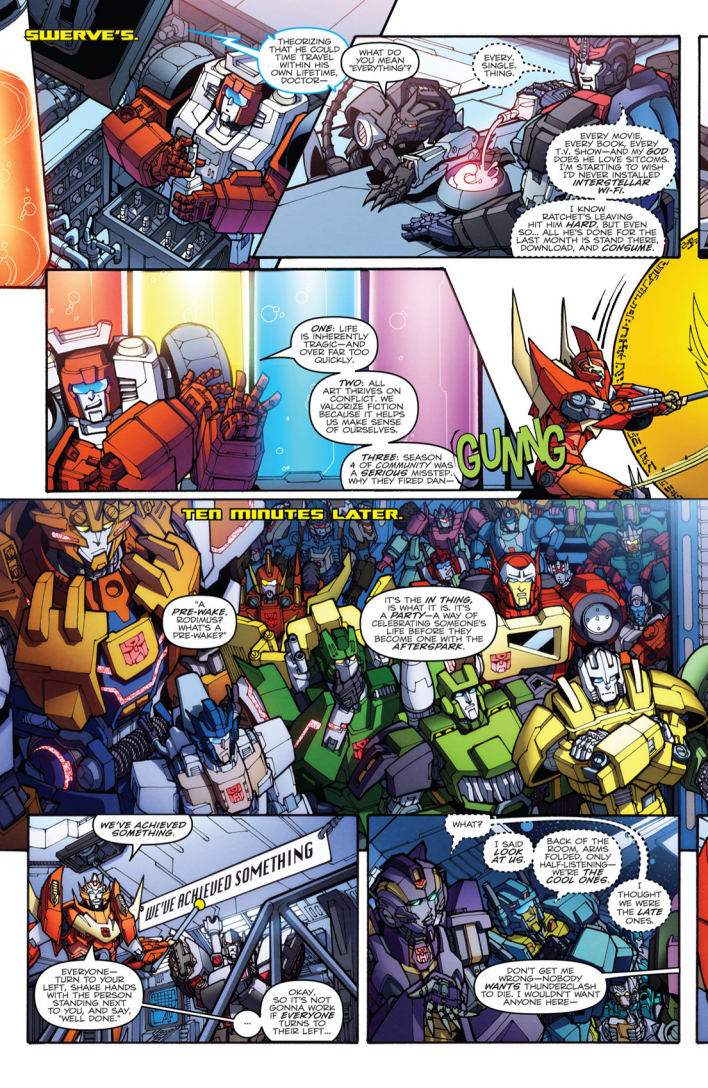
AW, HEY, I DIDN'T MEAN IT. DON'T COME DOWN ON MY ACCOUNT.
HOW ELSE AM I GOING TO PICK UP THE PIECES OF MY SHATTERED SELF-ESTEEM? "SILLY," INDEED.
OH, SHUSH, YOU ABE SUCH A B34.
UNLESS THAT'S A COMPLIMENT, I OBJECT.
IT'S A PERSONALITY TYPE, B34: BRILLIANT BUT INSECURE. YEAH, B34, TAKEN FROM THE... DON'T TELL ME...
FROM THE FROIDIAN CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM!
WHICH IS WHAT I'M READING ABOUT.
"CONFLICT OF INTEREST: PSYCHOTHERAPY AND PERPETUAL WAR," BY FROID, I TAKE IT.
NOT NECESSARILY. WEREN'T YOU LISTENING?
TO WHAT?
TO WHOM. RUNG, JUST NOW. WHEN HE LEANT ME THIS BOOK HE SAID—OKAY, INFERRED—THAT HE WAS FROID'S GHOSTWRITER. YOU DON'T REMEMBER THAT?
I LOVE RUNG TO BITS, BUT HE DOESN'T EXACTLY SET THE WORLD ON FIRE, DOES HE?
NOW, NOW. BE NICE.
I'M JUST SAYING: HE WALKS THROUGH LIFE WITH A VERY SOFT TREAD, AND THAT'S FINE!
WE CAN'T ALL BE THE LIFE AND SOUL, CAN WE?
ALRIGHT...! JEEZ! IS THIS BECAUSE I WAS MEAN ABOUT EYEBALLS?
NO BOMPING. WHY IS THIS EVEN A BOMPING SITUATION? YOU'LL DEVALUE THE BOMP.
EYEBROWS, I MEAN. RUNG. AND NO—IT'S BECAUSE I HAVE A HEADACHE THE SIZE OF A TITAN.
I TAKE IT ALL BACK—

—THIS IS WONDERFUL!
AND LOOK! READING! I CAN READ UPSIDE DOWN! I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED IF I COULD!
YOU NEVER THOUGHT TO, I DUNNO, TURN A BOOK UPSIDE DOWN?
I'M NOT HERE AND YOU CAN'T SEE ME. I'M HIDING BEHIND MY WALL OF SHAME.
FINISHED! ONE UPGRADED WRENCH!
NOW WHERE'S THAT ONE SHANIX YOU PROMISED ME?
I FEAR I MAY HAVE EXPLOITED YOUR IGNORANCE OF MONETARY VALUE. TELL YOU WHAT: IF THAT THING WORKS, I'LL PAY YOU TWO SHANIX. WHADDYA SAY?
RICH!

BRAINSTORM'S TURNED THIS INTO A RAVAGE DETECTOR. Y'KNOW, FOR WHEN HE'S HIDING.
YOU DON'T TRUST HIM TO STAY IN PLAIN SIGHT?
THE DECEPTICONS' MASTER OF STEALTH? ER. NO, FUNNILY ENOUGH.

YOU KNOW WHY RAVAGE IS SO GOOD AT BLENDING IN? BECAUSE HE WEARS HUNDREDS OF NANOSCOPIC ATTENTION DEFLECTORS —EACH ONE MISDIRECTING LIGHT BEFORE IT HITS THE EYE.
THE SIGNAL CARRIED BY THAT TORCH BEAM SHOULD FLUMMOX THE DEFLECTORS AND EXPOSE HIM.
CLANG

WHAT WAS THAT NOISE?
ONE THING'S FOR CERTAIN: IT CAN'T BE WHAT I THINK IT IS.


SWERVE'S.
THEORIZING THAT HE COULD TIME TRAVEL WITHIN HIS OWN LIFETIME, DOCTOR—
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "EVERYTHING"?
EVERY. SINGLE. THING.
EVERY MOVIE, EVERY BOOK, EVERY T.V. SHOW—AND MY GOD DOES HE LOVE SITCOMS. I'M STARTING TO WISH I'D NEVER INSTALLED INTERSTELLAR W-FI.
I KNOW. RATCHET'S LEAVING HIT HIM HARD, BUT EVEN SO... ALL HE'S DONE FOR THE LAST MONTH IS STAND THERE, DOWNLOAD, AND CONSUME.
ONE: LIFE IS INHERENTLY TRAGIC—AND OVER FAR TOO QUICKLY.
TWO: ALL ART THRIVES ON CONFLICT. WE VALORIZE FICTION BECAUSE IT HELPS US MAKE SENSE OF OURSELVES.
THREE: SEASON 4 OF COMMUNITY WAS A SERIOUS MISSTEP. WHY THEY FIRED DAN—
GUNNG
TEN MINUTES LATER.
"A PRE-WAKE, RODIMUS? WHAT'S A PRE-WAKE?
IT'S THE IN THING. IS WHAT IT IS. IT'S A PARTY—A WAY OF CELEBRATING SOMEONE'S LIFE BEFORE THEY BECOME ONE WITH THE AFTERSPARK.
WE'VE ACHIEVED SOMETHING.
WE'VE ACHIEVED SOMETHING
EVERYONE—TURN TO YOUR LEFT, SHAKE HANDS WITH THE PERSON STANDING NEXT TO YOU, AND SAY, "WELL DONE."
...
OKAY, SO IT'S NOT GONNA WORK IF EVERYONE TURNS TO THEIR LEFT...
WHAT?
I SAID LOOK AT US.
BACK OF THE ROOM, ARMS FOLDED, ONLY HALF-LISTENING—WE'RE THE COOL ONES.
THOUGHT WE WERE THE LATE ONES.
DON'T GET ME WRONG—NOBODY WANTS THUNDERCLASH TO DIE. I WOULDN'T WANT ANYONE HERE—

SO... BLUESTREAK SAYS YOU'VE FAMILIARIZED YOURSELF WITH THE ENTIRETY OF HUMANKIND'S CULTURAL OUTPUT; LITERALLY EVERYTHING THE HOMO SAPIENS HAVE EVER WRITTEN, MADE, FILMED, AND PERFORMED.
THAT'S FOUR WEEKS OF YOUR LIFE YOU'LL NEVER GET BACK...
AH, YOU SAY THAT, BUT IT'S ONLY NOW—HAVING DEVOURED 30,000 YEARS' WORTH OF STORIES AND SONGS—
—AND HAVING WATCHED AND READ AND ...LISTENED TO EVERYTHING FROM THE MAKING OF PTAHHOTEP TO INFINITE JEST—
—IT'S ONLY NOW THAT I'VE COME TO REALIZE THREE THINGS. THREE BOLD AND SHINING TRUTHS THAT I'LL CARRY WITH ME FOREVER.
GUNNG
WHAT'S THAT SOUND?
SERIOUSLY: WHAT IS IT?
IT'S THE SWEET SOUND OF PROGRESS! THE SOUND OF A MILESTONE BEING REACHED!
IT MEANS WE'RE ONE STEP CLOSER TO COMPLETING OUR QUEST!
RIGHT. ONLY I'VE NEVER EVER HEARD IT BEFORE.
TEN MINUTES AGO WE WERE INVITED TO OUR FIRST PRE-WAKE. A PRE-WAKE IN HONOR OF...
...WAIT FOR IT...
...START'S WITH A "T"...
...THUNDERCLASH!
BECAUSE THAT'S RIGHT: WE'VE FOUND HIM. WE HAVE 100% TRACKED HIM DOWN! IN OTHER WORDS...
—TO MISTAKE MY GRIEF FOR GIDDY EXCITEMENT.
BUT THE FACT IS, WE ALL KNEW THUNDERS WAS ON BORROWED TIME. HE'S BEEN LIVING WITH A FATAL INJURY FOR YEARS NOW—HE JUST REFUSED TO LET IMPENDING DEATH INTERRUPT HIS DERRING-DO.
HAVING SAID THAT, IT LOOMS AS IF HIS DERRING-DO...
DON'T EVEN SAY IT.
IS DERRING-DONE.
WE'RE SIX HOURS AWAY FROM THE VIS VITALIS.
TIME TO SMARTEN UP, PEOPLE. IF YOU WANT TO BREAK OUT YOUR RODIMUS STARS, GO AHEAD. WHAT MATTERS IS YOU LOOK YOUR BEST—

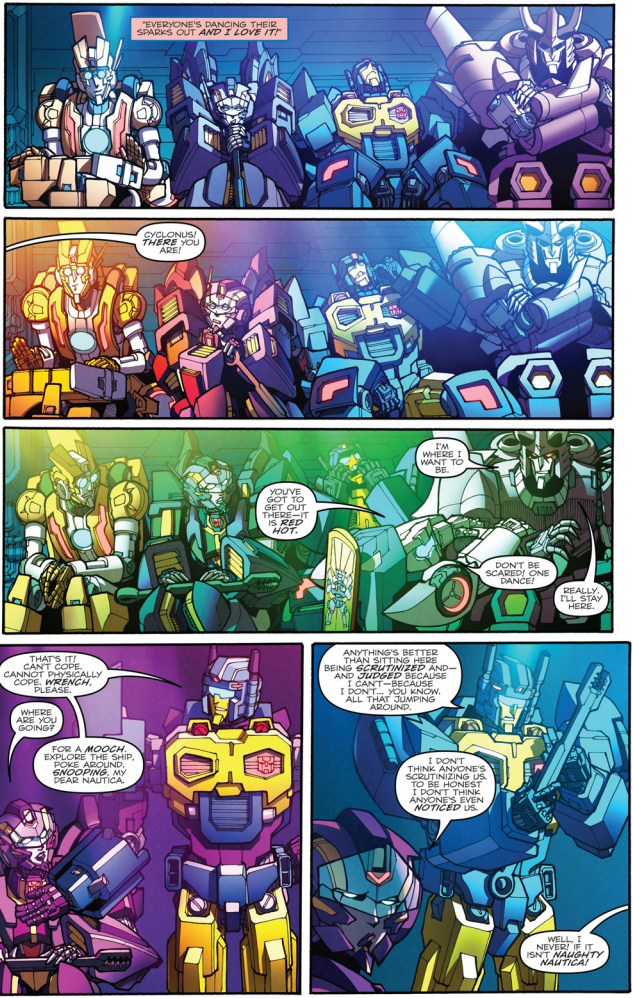
"—AND YOU DO YOUR CO-CAPTAIN PROUD!"
THE WAY YOU TALK TO THEM... I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU GET AWAY WITH IT.
IT DOES TAKE A SPECIAL SOMETHING. WHATEVER THAT "SOMETHING" IS, I'M RELIABLY TOLD I HAVE IT IN *SPADES*... AND I'D CONCEDE, GRUDGINGLY, THAT THUNDERCLASH HAS IT TOO.
NOT AS SUCH. I'VE TRIED TO *KILL* HIM SEVERAL TIMES...
HAVE YOU MET HIM?
TELL HIM, I SAID "HI."
ER—YOU DO KNOW I'M NOT GOING TO THE PRE-WAKE...
WELL... *I* CAN'T GO. I'M BUSY.
BUSY. WHAT, BUSY DOING WHAT?
PLANNING! I NEED TO... Y'KNOW. I NEED TO GET BEHIND MY DESK AND... STRATEGIZE.

WHICH IS WHAT I'VE BEEN SAVING FOR *WEEKS!*
ACTUALLY, YOU'VE BEEN SULKING IN YOUR QUARTERS EVER SINCE WE WENT BACK IN TIME AND CREATED YOU AND *YES* I'M AWARE HOW THAT SOUNDS.
C DECK
077
CO CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS
I HAVEN'T BEEN SULKING, I'VE BEEN—
YOU'VE BEEN *TAKING STOCK!* I *FORGOT!*
I'VE BEEN *WORKING* ANYWAY. ALL THIS—
WHAT? ALL THIS WHAT?
ALL *THIS!* ALL THIS. "I NEED TO GET BEHIND MY DESK AND STRATEGIZE." YOU JUST DON'T WANT TO SEE THUNDERCLASH.
THAT'S AN *OUTRAGEOUS* THING TO SAY...
"GET BEHIND MY DESK AND STRATEGIZE..."

VERY WELL, RODIMUS. WE'LL MEET BACK HERE IN SIX HOURS AND WE'LL PLAN *TOGETHER.*
FINE!
GOOD!
BECAUSE I AM GONNA PLAN YOU INTO THE *GROUND,* MEGATRON. I'M GONNA PLAN YOU *INTO NEXT WEEK.*
MAYBE, OR MAYBE AFTER FIVE MINUTES YOU'LL GET BORED AND START CARVING PICTURES ONTO YOUR DESK.

WRONG. ACTUALLY!
UTTERLY, DEMONSTRABLY, *VILLAINOUSLY* WRONG.
I RAN OUT OF SPACE *AGES* AGO.

LATER.
ABOUT TO BE TAKEN FROM US TOO SOON
RATCHET WOULD HAVE *LOVED* THIS!
ONCE WE'RE BACK ON THE *LOST LIGHT*, *DANCE OFF!* WHADDYA RECKON?
TOTALLY!
I SEE SOMEONE'S *CHEERED UP*— DON'T THINK I DIDN'T NOTICE YOU FLIRTING WITH THE HOTHEAD OVER THERE.
AS WAS I.
AS WERE YOU!
YOU KNOW WHAT? I THINK I'M READY FOR THAT *BOMP* NOW!
I FEEL LIKE BOMPING THE *WHOLE RUDDY WORLD!*


"EVERYONE'S DANCING THEIR SPARKS OUT AND I LOVE IT!"
CYCLONUS! THERE YOU ARE!
I'M WHERE I WANT TO BE.
YOU'VE GOT TO GET OUT THERE—IT IS RED HOT.
DON'T BE SCARED! ONE DANCE!
REALLY. I'LL STAY HERE.
THAT'S IT! CAN'T COPE. CANNOT PHYSICALLY COPE. WRENCH. PLEASE.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
FOR A MOOCH. EXPLORE THE SHIP. POKE AROUND. SNOOPING. MY DEAR NAUTICA.
ANYTHING'S BETTER THAN SITTING HERE BEING SCRUTINIZED AND— AND JUDGED BECAUSE I CAN'T—BECAUSE I DON'T... YOU KNOW. ALL THAT JUMPING AROUND.
I DON'T THINK ANYONE'S SCRUTINIZING US. TO BE HONEST I DON'T THINK ANYONE'S EVEN NOTICED US.
WELL, I NEVER! IF IT ISN'T NAUGHTY NAUTICA!

FIRESTAR?!
I THOUGHT I SAW YOU!
LOOK AT YOU! YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT!
WELL, TO BE FAIR, IT'S ONLY BEEN A YEAR OR SO SINCE I LEFT CAM—
STILL CLINGING TO THE SIDELINES. I WISH I HAD YOUR KNACK FOR BLENDING IN.
SORRY, NIGHTBEAT— THIS IS FIRESTAR. SHE'S MY, UM, SHE'S MY AMICA ENDURA, WE LIVED TOGETHER BACK ON CAMINUS.
SO! WHAT'S IT BEEN LIKE LOOKING AFTER MY BEST FRIEND?
HELLO, YES, SORRY, MUST DASH.
COME ON! I'VE BEEN WORKING ON SOME NEW MOVES. THEY WILL MAKE YOU DIE.
DON'T BE NAUGHTY, NAUTICA!
NAUGHTY, NAUGHTY, NAUTICA!
DO YOU MIND IF I SIT THIS ONE OUT?
HA HA! STILL HATE THE NICKNAME...!

YOU'VE CHANGED YOUR FLAME!
OH—YEAH, NO. I'VE BEEN RED FOR AGES NOW.
I REALLY LIKE IT.
THANK YOU!

WHAT ARE YOU EVEN *DOING* HERE?
DISTRESS SIGNAL. THE V.V. WAS PLAYING UP AND WE WERE WITHIN HELPING DISTANCE.
"WE"?
PROXIMA, ACCELERON, VELOCITY—SHE'S FINALLY PASSED HER EXAMS...
WHO ELSE...? SKYSTRIKER, JAVELIN, EXOCET, SKIMMER...

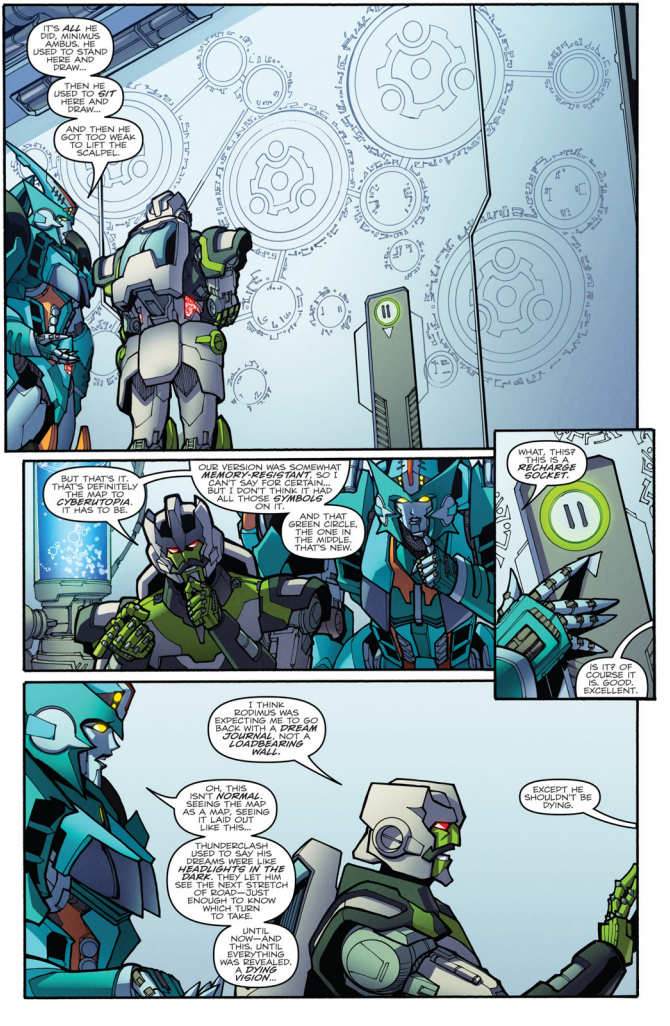
GOOD GRIEF, THAT'S HALF THE SORORITY!
YEP! SO AFTER WE FIXED THE V.V., THUNDERCLASH KINDA BEGGED US TO STICK AROUND. I'M SORT OF HIS *FIRST OFFICER* NOW...?
HIS—? WOW. I— *WOW.*

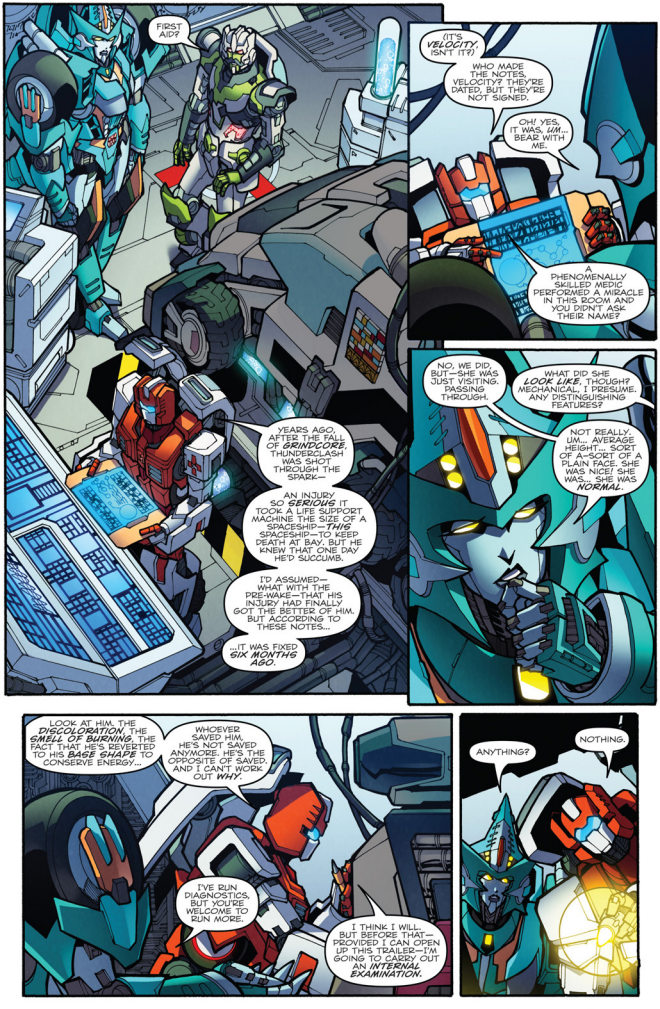
AND WHAT ABOUT YOU—STILL PLAYING WITH ENGINES?
STILL A FULLY QUALIFIED QUANTUM MECHANIC, YES.

SO HOW HAVE YOU *BEEN*? WHERE'S WINDBLADE? WHERE'S CHROMIA?
GOOD! I'VE BEEN—REALLY GOOD, ACTUALLY. WINDBLADE AND CHROMIA ARE ON CYBERTRON, SO—
SO YOU'RE *GOING IT ALONE!* THAT IS SO *BRAVE*. NO MORE COATTAILS FOR YOU, EH?

WHY DON'T YOU—
THINK I MIGHT—
...
ABSOLUTELY. YOU GO, GO AND DANCE. SHOW ME THOSE KILLER MOVES.

P-CHOW! P-CHOW!
"*THUNDERCLASH* DID THIS?"


IT'S ALL HE DID, MINIMUS AMBUS. HE USED TO STAND HERE AND DRAW...
THEN HE USED TO SIT HERE AND DRAW...
AND THEN HE GOT TOO WEAK TO LIFT THE SCALPEL.
BUT THAT'S IT. THAT'S DEFINITELY THE MAP TO CYBERUTOPIA. IT HAS TO BE.
OUR VERSION WAS SOMEWHAT MEMORY-RESISTANT, SO I CAN'T SAY FOR CERTAIN... BUT I DON'T THINK IT HAD ALL THOSE SYMBOLS ON IT.
AND THAT GREEN CIRCLE, THE ONE IN THE MIDDLE. THAT'S NEW.
WHAT, THIS? THIS IS A RECHARGE SOCKET.
IS IT? OF COURSE IT IS. GOOD. EXCELLENT.
I THINK RODIMUS WAS EXPECTING ME TO GO BACK WITH A DREAM JOURNAL, NOT A LOADBEARING WALL.
OH, THIS ISN'T NORMAL SEEING THE MAP AS A MAP, SEEING IT LAID OUT LIKE THIS...
THUNDERCLASH USED TO SAY HIS DREAMS WERE LIKE HEADLIGHTS IN THE DARK. THEY LET HIM SEE THE NEXT STRETCH OF ROAD—JUST ENOUGH TO KNOW WHICH TURN TO TAKE.
UNTIL NOW—AND THIS. UNTIL EVERYTHING WAS REVEALED. A DYING VISION...
EXCEPT HE SHOULDN'T BE DYING.


FIRST AID?
YEARS AGO, AFTER THE FALL OF GRINDCORE THUNDERCLASH WAS SHOT THROUGH THE SPARK—
AN INJURY SO SERIOUS IT TOOK A LIFE SUPPORT MACHINE THE SIZE OF A SPACESHIP—THE SPACESHIP—TO KEEP DEATH AT BAY. BUT HE KNEW THAT ONE DAY HE'D SUCCUMB.
I'D ASSUMED—WHAT WITH THE PRE-WAKE—THAT HIS INJURY HAD FINALLY GOT THE BETTER OF HIM. BUT ACCORDING TO THESE NOTES...
...IT WAS FIXED SIX MONTHS AGO.
IT'S VELOCITY, ISN'T IT?
WHO MADE THE NOTES, VELOCITY? THEY'RE DATED, BUT THEY'RE NOT SIGNED.
OH! YES, IT WAS, UM... BEAR WITH ME.
A PHENOMENALLY SKILLED MEDIC PERFORMED A MIRACLE IN THIS ROOM AND YOU DIDN'T ASK THEIR NAME?
NO, WE DID, BUT—SHE WAS JUST VISITING. PASSING THROUGH.
WHAT DID SHE LOOK LIKE, THOUGH? MECHANICAL, I PRESUME. ANY DISTINGUISHING FEATURES?
NOT REALLY. UM... AVERAGE HEIGHT... SORT OF A-SORT OF A PLAIN FACE. SHE WAS NICE! SHE WAS... SHE WAS NORMAL.
LOOK AT HIM. THE DISCOLORATION, THE SMELL OF BURNING, THE FACT THAT HE'S REVERTED TO HIS BASE SHAPE TO CONSERVE ENERGY...
WHOEVER SAVED HIM, HE'S NOT SAVED ANYMORE. HE'S THE OPPOSITE OF SAVED, AND I CAN'T WORK OUT WHY.
I'VE RUN DIAGNOSTICS, BUT YOU'RE WELCOME TO RUN MORE.
I THINK I WILL, BUT BEFORE THAT—PROVIDED I CAN OPEN UP THIS TRAILER—I'M GOING TO CARRY OUT AN INTERNAL EXAMINATION.
ANYTHING?
NOTHING.

"NOT COMING?"

I DON'T KNOW, SKIDS.

I FEEL I OUGHT TO ***STICK AROUND*** FOR THE FUNERAL AND MAYBE CATCH UP WITH THE OLD GANG. THEY'RE NOT ***ALL***... Y'KNOW.

I MEAN, ***ACCELERON***— SHE AND PROXIMA ARE A ***GENUINELY NICE COUPLE***, AND SKYSTRIKER! IF YOU CAN GET HIM TO TALK ABOUT SOMETHING OTHER THAN HIMSELF, HE'S ***GOOD***, HE'S ***FUNNY!***

YAY. WELL, A FEW OTHER ***LOST LIGHTERS*** ARE STAYING BEHIND AS WELL, SO—

REALLY? WHO?

THINGY AND WHATSISNAME, I DUNNO.

POINT IS, RODIMUS IS FLYING TO THE NEAREST ***STARHUB*** TO BUY MORE HIGHLIGHTER PENS, OR SOMETHING.

HE SAYS HE'LL SWING BY IN A COUPLE OF DAYS AND PICK UP ANY STRAGGLERS, SO YOU MIGHT AS WELL...

YOU MIGHT AS WELL...

D'YOU MIND IF I SIT DOWN?

SELECT A-VERT

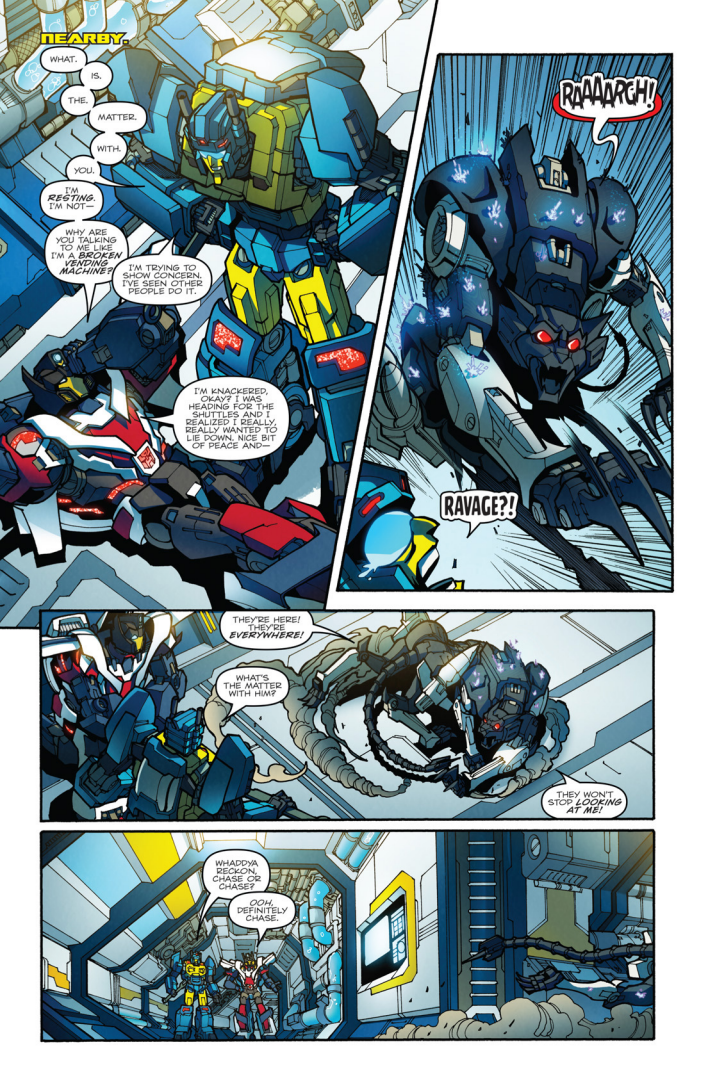
ARE YOU ALRIGHT?

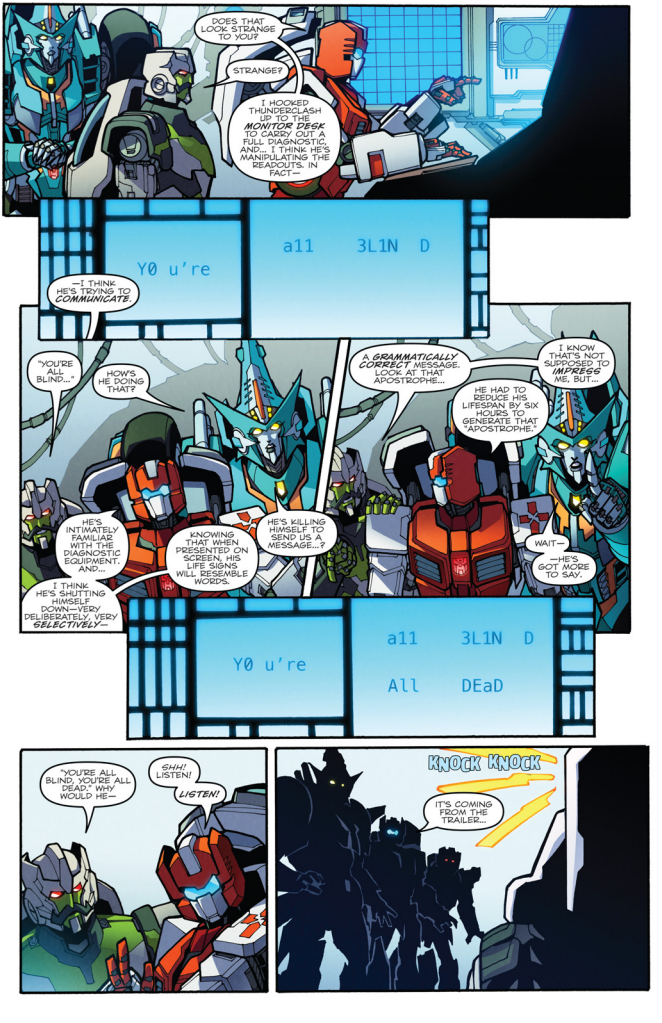
FINE. JUST A BIT WEIRD, BIT... FUNNY.

ARE ***YOU*** ALRIGHT?

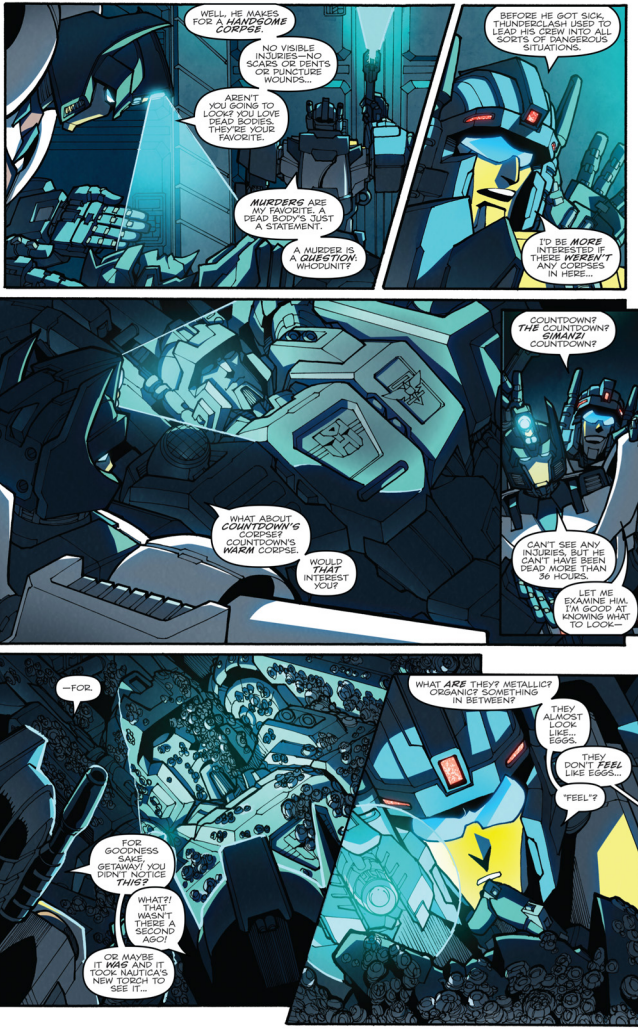
SOMETHING'S ON YOUR MIND.

ACTUALLY, CAN I BORROW YOU FOR A MINUTE?


NEARBY.
WHAT.
IS.
THE.
MATTER.
WITH.
YOU.
I'M *RESTING*. I'M NOT—
WHY ARE YOU TALKING TO ME LIKE I'M A *BROKEN VENDING MACHINE*?
I'M TRYING TO SHOW CONCERN. I'VE SEEN OTHER PEOPLE DO IT.
I'M KNACKERED, OKAY? I WAS HEADING FOR THE SHUTTLES AND I REALIZED I REALLY, REALLY WANTED TO LIE DOWN, NICE BIT OF PEACE AND—
RAAAARGH!
RAVAGE?!
THEY'RE HERE! THEY'RE *EVERYWHERE*!
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HIM?
THEY WON'T STOP *LOOKING AT ME*!
WHADDYA RECKON, CHASE OR CHASE?
OOH, DEFINITELY CHASE.


DOES THAT LOOK STRANGE TO YOU?
STRANGE?
I HOOKED THUNDERCLASH UP TO THE MONITOR DESK TO CARRY OUT A FULL DIAGNOSTIC, AND... I THINK HE'S MANIPULATING THE READOUTS. IN FACT—
Y0 u're
a11 3L1N D
—I THINK HE'S TRYING TO COMMUNICATE.
"YOU'RE ALL BLIND..."
HOW'S HE DOING THAT?
HE'S INTIMATELY FAMILIAR WITH THE DIAGNOSTIC EQUIPMENT. AND...
I THINK HE'S SHUTTING HIMSELF DOWN—VERY DELIBERATELY, VERY SELECTIVELY—
KNOWING THAT WHEN PRESENTED ON SCREEN, HIS LIFE SIGNS WILL RESEMBLE WORDS.
HE'S KILLING HIMSELF TO SEND US A MESSAGE...?
A GRAMMATICALLY CORRECT MESSAGE. LOOK AT THAT APOSTROPHE...
HE HAD TO REDUCE HIS LIFESPAN BY SIX HOURS TO GENERATE THAT APOSTROPHE.
I KNOW THAT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO IMPRESS ME, BUT...
WAIT—
—HE'S GOT MORE TO SAY.
Y0 u're
a11 3L1N D
All DEaD
"YOU'RE ALL BLIND, YOU'RE ALL DEAD." WHY WOULD HE—
SHH! LISTEN!
LISTEN!
KNOCK KNOCK
IT'S COMING FROM THE TRAILER...

UNLESS I MISS MY GUESS—
COLD STORAGE
—HE WENT IN HERE.
HOW—DID YOU RUN—THAT FAST?
WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT A MORGUE?
"THEY WON'T STOP LOOKING AT ME," RAVAGE SAID. WHERE WOULD YOU GO IF YOU DON'T WANT TO BE SEEN?
OKAY, YEAH. SOMEWHERE DARK.
LET'S SEE IF NAUTICA'S LATEST APP WAS WORTH THE TWO SHANIX...
OVER HERE, NIGHTBEAT! OVER HERE...
THIS ONE LOOKS LIKE PHOTON!
PHOTON OF IBEX? THE RACER?
I DO. I CAN NAME THREE ATHLETES: BLURR... HIM...
I THOUGHT YOU HATED SPORTS...
...
I CAN NAME TWO ATHLETES.
I KNOW HIM FROM THE—OH, YOU KNOW. THOSE TALKS. RETIRED RACERS ALWAYS—
MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER! THAT'S HOW I KNOW HIM. "SPEED IS A STATE OF MIND—LEARN TO ACCELERATE."
I SUPPOSE HE HAD A CERTAIN... JE NE SAIS QUOI, BUT HIS EPIGRAMS WERE ON A PAR WITH ALPHA TRION'S.
BELIEVE ME, THERE IS NO FAINTER PRAISE.


WELL, HE MAKES FOR A HANDSOME CORPSE.
NO VISIBLE INJURIES—NO SCARS OR DENTS OR PUNCTURE WOUNDS...
AREN'T YOU GOING TO LOOK? YOU LOVE DEAD BODIES. THEY'RE YOUR FAVORITE.
MURDERS ARE MY FAVORITE. A DEAD BODY'S JUST A STATEMENT.
A MURDER IS A QUESTION. WHODUNIT?
BEFORE, HE GOT SICK, THUNDERCLASH USED TO LEAD HIS CREW INTO ALL SORTS OF DANGEROUS SITUATIONS.
I'D BE MORE INTERESTED IF THERE WEREN'T ANY CORPSES IN HERE...
COUNTDOWN? THE COUNTDOWN? SUMANI COUNTDOWN?
WHAT ABOUT COUNTDOWN'S CORPSE? COUNTDOWN'S WARM CORPSE.
WOULD THAT INTEREST YOU?
CAN'T SEE ANY INJURIES, BUT HE CAN'T HAVE SEEN DEAD MORE THAN 36 HOURS.
LET ME EXAMINE HIM. I'M GOOD AT KNOWING WHAT TO LOOK—
—FOR.
FOR GOODNESS SAKE, GETAWAY! YOU DIDN'T NOTICE THIS?
WHAT?! THAT WASN'T THERE A SECOND AGO!
OR MAYBE IT WAS AND IT TOOK NAUTICA'S NEW TORCH TO SEE IT...
WHAT ARE THEY? METALLIC? ORGANIC? SOMETHING IN BETWEEN?
THEY ALMOST LOOK LIKE... EGGS.
THEY DON'T FEEL LIKE EGGS...
"FEEL"?

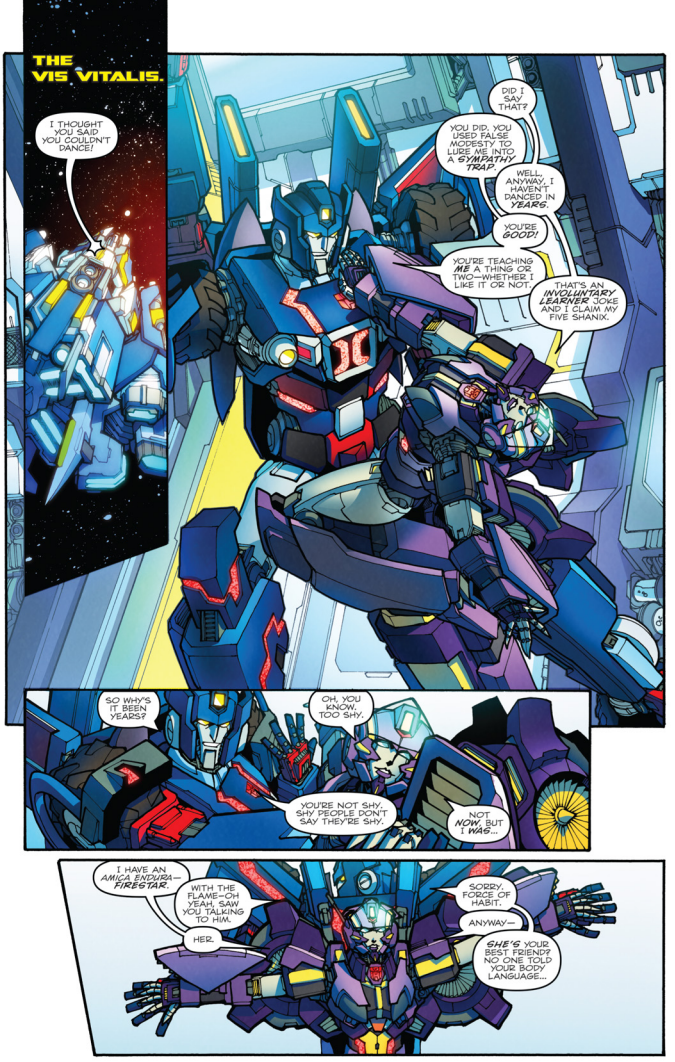
WHAT DO YOU MEAN I—
AH.
OKAY, SLIGHTLY UNNERVED.
I'VE ONLY JUST NOTICED THEM—THEY'RE THROBBING.
THEY'RE BURNING. WHAT ARE THEY?!
WHATEVER THEY ARE...
...THEY'RE THE SECOND WORST THING I'VE SEEN TODAY.

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #41 COVER B

by **NICK ROCHE** Colors by **JOSH BURCHAM**

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #42 COVER A

by **ALEX MILNE** Colors by **JOSH PEREZ**


THE VIS VITALIS.
I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU COULDN'T DANCE!
DID I SAY THAT?
YOU DID, YOU USED FALSE MODESTY TO LURE ME INTO A *SYMPATHY TRAP*.
WELL, ANYWAY, I HAVEN'T DANCED IN *YEARS*.
YOU'RE *GOOD!*
YOU'RE TEACHING *ME* A THING OR TWO—WHETHER I LIKE IT OR NOT.
THAT'S AN *INVOLUNTARY LEARNER* JOKE AND I CLAIM MY FIVE SHANIX.
SO WHY'S IT BEEN YEARS?
OH, YOU KNOW, *TOO* SHY.
YOU'RE NOT SHY. SHY PEOPLE DON'T SAY THEY'RE SHY.
NOT *NOW*, BUT I *WAS*...
I HAVE AN *AMICA ENDURA*—*FIRESTAR*.
WITH THE FLAME—OH YEAH, SAW YOU TALKING TO HIM.
HER.
SORRY. FORCE OF HABIT.
ANYWAY—
SHE'S YOUR BEST FRIEND? NO ONE TOLD YOUR BODY LANGUAGE...

I *TRY* TO LIKE HER, BUT—SHE MAKES IT VERY HARD.

SHE'S A FANTASTIC DANCER—AND *ACTOR*—AND *ACROBAT*—BUT BY THE *SPARK OF SOLUS* SHE WON'T LET YOU FORGET IT. COMPARED TO HER, I'M—

A WARM, SMART, HYPER-LITERATE QUANTUM MECHANIC?

KUNK

WATCH OUT FOR THE—

BEHIND YOU! *RECHARGE SOCKET!*

THAT'S *YOUR* FAULT—AMBUSHING PEOPLE WITH COMPLIMENTS...

SERIOUSLY, THOUGH, WHY FEEL INFERIOR?

WHERE I COME FROM, THE *PERFORMING ARTS* CARRY A CERTAIN *CACHET*.

IF YOU'RE NOT AN "ARTISTE"—IF YOU DON'T AT LEAST TRY—AND I *DIDN'T* TRY—IT'S FROWNED UPON.

"NAUGHTY NAUTICA," THEY CALLED ME—UNTIL THEY NEEDED SOMEONE TO GO LOOKING FOR CYBERTRON...

FIRESTAR STILL HASN'T FORGIVEN ME FOR GETTING CALLED UP—OR *WINDBLADE*, FOR DOING THE CALLING.

STILL DON'T GET HOW YOU TWO ENDED UP TOGETHER.

SORRY—THINK A SIT DOWN'S IN ORDER.

I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU FIND YOUR ENERGY...

ON CAMINUS, FOR CERTAIN ADHERENTS OF THE *WAY OF THE FLAME*, THERE'S A *PRESSURE TO BEFRIEND*.

IF YOU HAVEN'T FOUND AT LEAST ONE *AMICA ENDURA* WITHIN TEN MEGACYCLES OF YOUR CREATION DATE, YOU'RE—

WHAT? KILLED? BECAUSE *OH MY GOD!*

WRITTEN OFF!

YOU BECOME *PERSONA NON GRATA* AND YES, I QUITE AGREE: IT'S PATHETIC.

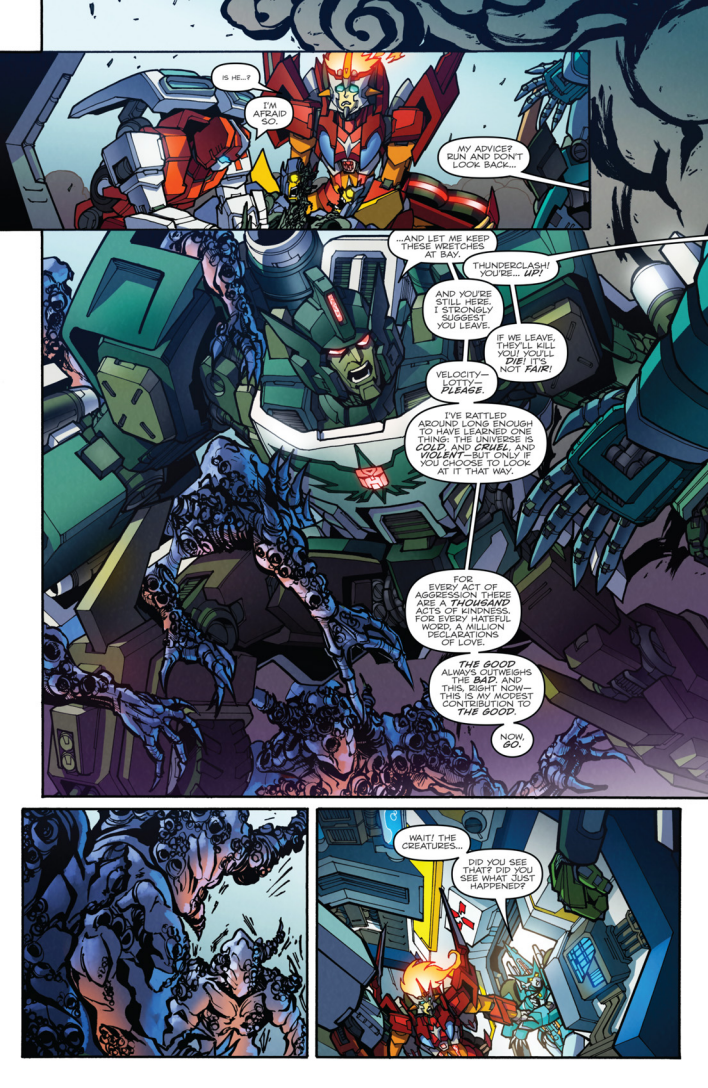
NO ONE WANTED FIRESTAR FOR A BEST FRIEND, AND I WASN'T TOO KEEN ON BEING OFFICIALLY LONELY, SO WHEN SHE RECITED THE OATH OF CONSTANCY I... WENT ALONG WITH IT.
SO SPLIT UP—OR WHATEVER THE EQUIVALENT IS ON YOUR INCREASINGLY WEIRD-SOUNDING HOME WORLD.
CAN YOU SPLIT UP?
(I SPLIT UP WITH THIS HELMUT CALLED CHOPPER, AND I'LL TELL YOU WHY! BECAUSE HE TURNED OUT TO BE AN ABSOLUTE ARSE)
YOU CAN SPLIT UP—WE CALL IT PLATONIC SEVERANCE—BUT IT'S LITERALLY THE WORST THING YOU CAN DO TO SOMEONE.
UH-HUH...
REJECTING A FRIEND—EVEN A FORCED FRIEND—IT REPRESENTS FAILURE.
YOUR FAILURE. IT SAYS YOU'VE NOT DONE ENOUGH TO MAKE IT...
UM, SKIDS...?
HRRR...
IS EVERYTHING ALRIGHT?
ACTUALLY...
...I THINK I CAN ANSWER THAT FOR BOTH OF US.
THE FRAIL GAZE

TOO WEAK TO... DEPLOY WEAPONS...
IN WHICH CASE, ANY CHANCE OF TEACHING ME TO *FIGHT* IN THE NEXT FIVE SECONDS?
OTHERWISE, ALL I'VE GOT TO THROW AT THEM IS A SELECTION OF *SCATHING LITERARY QUOTATIONS*...
"THERE IS NONE SO CRAVEN A FIGHTER AS ONE WHO USES HEFT TO—"
THOK!
UGH!
"WHOEVER THEY ARE..."

NEARBY.
THEY USE A KIND OF PERCEPTION-BASED CLOAKING DEVICE TO HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT.
WHEN WE DETECTED THEM— WHEN WE FOUND EVIDENCE OF THEM— THE SPOORES ON YOUR FACE—THEY WERE FORCED INTO THE OPEN.
THEY KNOW WE'RE ONTO THEM. GETAWAY—
—THAT'S WHY THEY'RE ATTACKING US!
THEY'RE RELENTLESS! THEY WON'T EVEN STOP TO LET ME APPLAUD YOUR BRILLIANT REASONING...
AND WHY ARE ONLY IDIOTS AFFECTED?
I'M SORRY. WHEN DID THE VIS VITALIS GET HIT BY A SARCASM BEAM?
OW!
WHAT ARE YOU? WHAT DID YOU DO TO COUNTDOWN?
WAS HIS DEATH INTENTIONAL, OR—OR SOME KIND OF SIDE EFFECT?
UNLESS...
HE WAS AN INCUBATOR. WASN'T HE?
A SURROGATE—AN UNWITTING ONE. JUST LIKE GETAWAY! YOUR OFFSPRING WERE FEEDING OFF HIS LIFE-FORCE—BUT THEY GOT TOO GREEDY!

FROOSH
KOOM
RRAWR!
BUT YOU WERE BURNING UP!*
RAVAGE?
MY ATTENTION DEFLECTORS WERE *OVERHEATING*. I KNEW I WAS BEING WATCHED, BUT I COULDN'T WORK OUT WHOSE GAZE I HAD TO AVOID.
I COOLED DOWN AFTER THESE *FREAKS* REVEALED THEMSELVES.
*LAST ISSUE.
UH, GUYS? WHO'S UP FOR A SPOT OF *LEAVING THE ROOM*?
I HEAR *SOMEWHERE ELSE* IS REALLY NICE THIS TIME OF YEAR...
ONE LAST THING!
A-HA!
THOUGHT SO!
"I'M HAPPY TO DEFER TO THE DOCTORS IN THE ROOM..."

THE MEDIBAY.
...BUT I'M GUESSING THESE CREATURES ARE WHY THUNDERCLASH IS SICK.
I DON'T GET IT! HOW DID THEY ALL FIT INTO HIS TRAILER?!
ONLY THE BLUE ONE WAS IN THE TRAILER— THE OTHERS JUST... APPEARED.
STAND BACK, CHAPS. THIS'LL SORT 'EM!
CHA-KOOM
WHAT'S ALL THIS NOISE?
VELOCITY? WHAT THE HECK IS GOING—
AK!
SLETCH
SKYSTRIKER!


IS HE...?
I'M AFRAID SO.
MY ADVICE? RUN AND DON'T LOOK BACK...
...AND LET ME KEEP THESE WRETCHES AT BAY.
THUNDERCLASH! YOU'RE... UP!
AND YOU'RE STILL HERE. I STRONGLY SUGGEST YOU LEAVE.
IF WE LEAVE, THEY'LL KILL YOU! YOU'LL DIE! IT'S NOT FAIR!
VELOCITY—LOTTY—PLEASE.
I'VE RATTLED AROUND LONG ENOUGH TO HAVE LEARNED ONE THING: THE UNIVERSE IS COLD AND CRUEL AND VIOLENT—BUT ONLY IF YOU CHOOSE TO LOOK AT IT THAT WAY.
FOR EVERY ACT OF AGGRESSION THERE ARE A THOUSAND ACTS OF KINDNESS. FOR EVERY HATEFUL WORD, A MILLION DECLARATIONS OF LOVE.
THE GOOD ALWAYS OUTWEIGHS THE BAD. AND THIS, RIGHT NOW—THIS IS MY MODEST CONTRIBUTION TO THE GOOD.
NOW, GO.
WAIT! THE CREATURES...
DID YOU SEE THAT? DID YOU SEE WHAT JUST HAPPENED?

THE DANCEFLOOR.
HFF!
KLIK
I'M SURPRISED THAT WORKED. I WASN'T *ENTIRELY* SURE THEY WERE ORGANIC...
YES, WELL... THEY WERE CRAMPING OUR STYLE. NOW *MOVE!*
YOU... ELECTROCUTED THEM...

NAUTICA!
FIRESTAR! ARE YOU ALRIGHT? WHERE'S THE REST OF YOUR CREW?
UM... VELOCITY'S HERE...
LOTTY! I HEARD YOU PASSED YOUR MEDICAL EXAMS!
I KNOW! TENTH TIME LUCKY!
THAT'S AMAZING!
THANK YOU!
THAT POWER SURGE MUST'VE SHORTED OUT THE DOORS.
COME ON, EVERYONE! HEAVE HO!
CAN YOU HEAR ME, SKIDS? WE NEED TO LOCK OURSELVES IN!
SHH, TIRED.
HOLD THE DOOR!
IS THIS SURVIVORS CLUB?
YES—AND YOU'RE IN LUCK. WE'RE RECRUITING.

WE'RE BEING CHASED BY—BY—BY MONSTERS!

I DOUBT THEY NORMALLY LOOK AS... MONSTROUS. THIS MUST BE THEM IN ATTACK MODE.

BUT WHERE DID THEY ALL COME FROM?

BEST GUESS? THEY'RE A TYPE OF AMBIENT CHAMBELEON. THEY SEEM TO BE ABLE TO CONFOUND THE EYE BY PRACTICING AN ADVANCED FORM OF SOCIAL CAMOUFLAGE.

SOCIAL WHAT?

YOU KNOW HOW SOME PEOPLE CAN LOSE THEMSELVES IN A CROWDED PLACE?

THESE GUYS DON'T NEED A CROWD.

WHAT DID YOU MEAN BY FIRESTAR'S CREW? WHEN WE CAME IN, YOU DIDN'T SAY "THE CREW," YOU SAID "FIRESTAR'S—

AH, YES—HA—FUNNY—I, UM, MAYVE LET NAUTICA THINK THAT THUNDERCLASH PUT ME IN CHARGE AFTER WE RESCUED HIM.

AND... I MAYVE LET HEE THINK WE RESCUED HIM.

HE RESCUED US.

WE WERE SENT TO LOOK FOR YOU—AND WINDBLADE, AND CHROMIA—BUT WE HIT AN ASTEROID OFF REUGS VII. POOR VERTEX JUST COLLAPSED AT THE CONTROLS.

THE GREATEST ACTOR OF HEE GENERATION, AND HEE SPARK SUDDENLY GAVE OUT.

OH, OH, DEAR.

THAT'S NOT... WHAT PEOPLE SAY... WHEN EVERYTHING'S... HONKY DORY.

BRACE YOURSELF: I'M ABOUT TO EXPLAIN SOMETHING TO THE OTHERS AND I MAY ACCIDENTALLY REFER TO YOU IN THE FAST TENSE.

THESE CREATURES ARE SPREADING. THEY LATCHED ONTO COUNTDOWN AND PHOTON AND KILLED THEM, AND NOW SKIDS AND GETAWAY ARE... I DON'T KNOW. WHAT'S A LESS ALARMING WORD THAN "DYING"?

PRETTY SURE YOU CAN ADD THUNDERCLASH TO THAT LIST.

RIGHT—SO THE QUESTION IS, WHY THEM AND NOT US?

WHY THOSE FIVE?

WELL, THEY'VE ALL GOT IT, HAVEN'T THEY?

"IT"? WHAT'S "IT"?

THAT CERTAIN SOMETHING. THAT STAR QUALITY—STAGE PRESENCE. NAUTICA, YOU'RE GOOD WITH WORDS...

CHARISMA?

OH MY GOD! THEY'RE *PERSONALITY TICKS!*

AND...?

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, *THREE CHEERS?*

YOU CAN'T JUST SHOUT OUT "*PERSONALITY TICKS!*" AND LEAVE IT AT THAT.

PERSONALITY TICKS. *PRETERNATURAL ECTOPARASITES*. THEY FEED ON *ADMIRABLE CHARACTER TRAITS* LIKE—WELL, LIKE CHARM AND HUMILITY AND—AND—CHARISMA.

NOT THAT YOU'D BE FAMILIAR WITH ANY OF THOSE.

I SHOULD'VE TWIGGED EARLIER, WHEN I REALIZED THEY WERE *ATTENTION-REPELLENT*—BUT I'VE ALWAYS DISMISSED PERSONALITY TICKS AS A MYTH...

SORRY, STILL *VERY* HAND WAVY. "ATTENTION-REPELLANT ECTO-PARASITES"?

THEY'RE ATTRACTED TO YOU—TO YOUR *MAGNETIC PERSONALITY*. THEY'VE BEEN FEEDING OFF YOUR CHARISMA AND DRAINING YOUR SPARK IN THE PROCESS.

THEY MUST'VE BEEN LIVING OFF THUNDERCLASH FOR *MONTHS*...

AND YOU WORKED THIS OUT *HOW*, EXACTLY?

FIRESTAR'S FLAME.

THE PERSONALITY TICKS MYTH ORIGINATED ON THE PLANET *MARASMA*. I CAN TELL FROM THE COLOR OF FIRESTAR'S FLAME THAT SHE'S BURNING *BLACK DIAMOND*—

—AN EXCEPTIONALLY RARE *COMBUSTIBLE* FOUND ONLY—

ON MARASMA. OKAY, GOT IT.

WE VISITED MARASMA THREE DAYS AFTER LEAVING CAMINUS.

THE PERSONALITY TICKS MUST'VE SNEAKED ON BOARD THEN. THEY WERE PROBABLY ATTRACTED TO... VERTEX?

WAS THAT HER NAME? THE ACTOR?

THAT'S THE ONE.

THEY DRAINED HER—*KILLED* HER—AND THEN WHEN THUNDERCLASH TURNED UP, TURNED THEIR ATTENTION TO *HIM*...

SO I GUESS ONE OF THEM—ONE OF THESE "PERSONALITY TICKS"—BECOME COVER TO FIX HIM—TO PROLONG HIS LIFE SO THEY COULD PROLONG THEIR *FOOD SUPPLY*...

IN FACT—

BACK IN THE MEDIBAY, WHEN THUNDERCLASH SAID HE WAS STAYING BEHIND—WHEN HE GAVE THIS *BIG SPEECH*, THE CREATURES—THE TICKS—

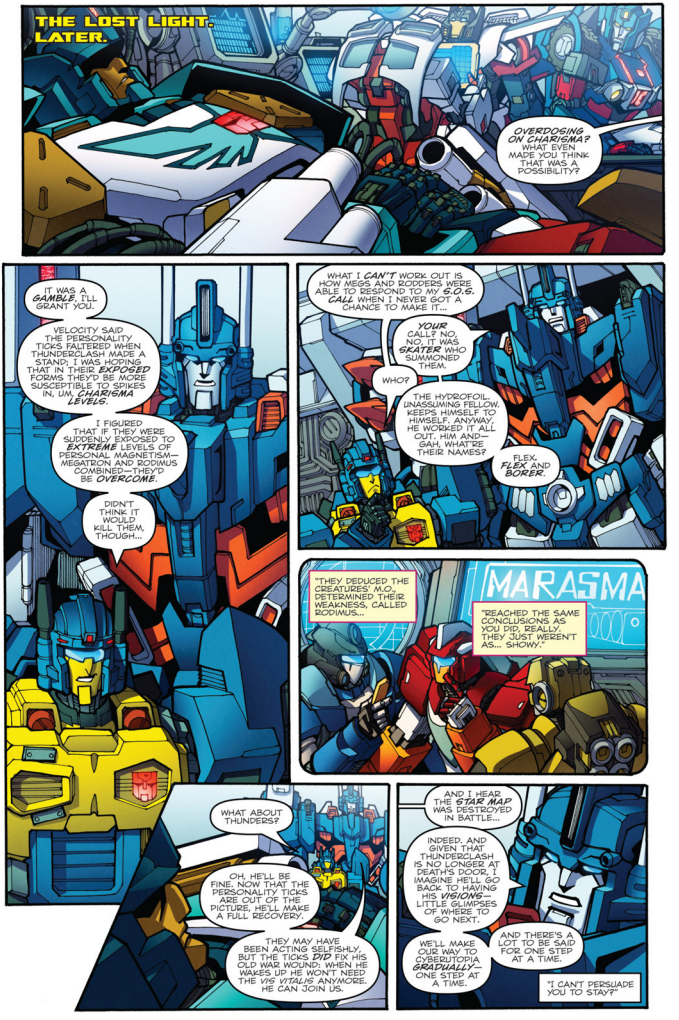
IT SEEMED TO *HURT THEM*. THEY *SHUDDERED*.

OKAY, LESS TALK, MORE HELP. HOW DO WE REVERSE THIS?
HOW DO WE SAVE THEM?
IT'S SOMETHING OF A LONG SHOT, BUT—
WAIT. SHUSH. BUT CAN ANYONE ELSE HEAR RUNNING?
AARGH!
THERE'S SO MANY OF THEM!
JUST KEEP SHOOTING!
AND IN TEN SECONDS' TIME, WHEN MY WRIST RUNS OUT OF JUICE...?

GAH!
HOLD STILL!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
INNERMOST ENERGON IS HIGHLY EXPLOSIVE. JUST ADD A LITTLE HEAT, AND WHEN IT STARTS TO BUBBLE...
"...GET RID OF IT!"

WONDERFUL! THEY'RE STILL ATTACKING US, BUT NOW THEY'RE ON FIRE!

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THEM?! THEY'RE COLLAPSING!
THIS BETTER BE GOOD, GUYS...
...I WAS COLORING IN MY WALL CHART.


THE LOST LIGHT. LATER.
OVERDOSING ON CHARISMA? WHAT EVEN MADE YOU THINK THAT WAS A POSSIBILITY?
IT WAS A GAMBLE, I'LL GRANT YOU.
VELOCITY SAID THE PERSONALITY TICKS FALTERED WHEN THUNDERCLASH MADE A STAND; I WAS HOPING THAT IN THEIR EXPOSED FORMS THEY'D BE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO SPIKES IN, UM, CHARISMA LEVELS.
I FIGURED THAT IF THEY WERE SUDDENLY EXPOSED TO EXTREME LEVELS OF PERSONAL MAGNETISM—MEGATRON AND RODIMUS COMBINED—THEY'D BE OVERCOME.
DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD KILL THEM, THOUGH...
WHAT I CAN'T WORK OUT IS HOW MEGS AND RODDERS WERE ABLE TO RESPOND TO MY S.O.S. CALL WHEN I NEVER GOT A CHANCE TO MAKE IT...
YOUR CALL? NO, NO, IT WAS GRATER WHO SUMMONED THEM.
WHO?
THE HYDROFOIL, UNASSUMING FELLOW, KEEPS HIMSELF TO HIMSELF. ANYWAY, HE WORKED IT ALL OUT. HIM AND—GAH, WHAT'RE THEIR NAMES?
FLEX. FLEX AND BORER.
"THEY DEDUCED THE CREATURES' M.O. DETERMINED THEIR WEAKNESS, CALLED RODIMUS...
MARASMA
"REACHED THE SAME CONCLUSIONS AS YOU DID, REALLY. THEY JUST WEREN'T AS... SHOWY."
WHAT ABOUT THUNDERS?
OH, HE'LL BE FINE. NOW THAT THE PERSONALITY TICKS ARE OUT OF THE PICTURE, HE'LL MAKE A FULL RECOVERY.
THEY MAY HAVE BEEN ACTING SELFISHLY, BUT THE TICKS DID FIX HIS OLD WAR WOUND; WHEN HE WAKES UP HE WON'T NEED THE VIS VITALIS ANYMORE. HE CAN JOIN US.
AND I HEAR THE STAR MAP WAS DESTROYED IN BATTLE...
INDEED. AND GIVEN THAT THUNDERCLASH IS NO LONGER AT DEATH'S DOOR, I IMAGINE HE'LL GO BACK TO HAVING HIS VISIONS—LITTLE GLIMPSES OF WHERE TO GO NEXT.
WE'LL MAKE OUR WAY TO CYBERUTOPIA GRADUALLY—ONE STEP AT A TIME.
AND THERE'S A LOT TO BE SAID FOR ONE STEP AT A TIME.
"I CAN'T PERSUADE YOU TO STAY?"

SHUTTLE BAY FOUR.

PERSUADE ME TO STAY? I'M NOT ALL THAT SURE YOU'VE *TRIED*...

AW, NOW—

TEASING.

BUT NO, *CAMINUS* CALLS. THE TROUPE IS GETTING RESTLESS, AND THE V.V.'S UP FOR GRABS, SO...

NO MORE SPACE ADVENTURES?

SPACE ADVENTURES? SKYSTALKER *DIED*, NAUTICA. WE *ALL* NEARLY *DIED*! KILLED BY CREATURES THAT BARELY MAKE *SENSE*!

WHAT HAPPENED TODAY—IT'S NOT NORMALLY AS WEIRD AND DANGEROUS AS THAT.

ISN'T IT?

KAY, MAYBE IT IS.

SAY GOODBYE TO THE OTHERS FOR ME, AND MAKE SURE *LOTTY* PUTS HER NEW SKILLS TO GOOD USE.

I DON'T WANT HER THINKING THAT MEDICINE IS ANY LESS NOBLE A PROFESSION THAN—

WHAT'S UP? NO FIST-BUMP?

I'VE BEEN THINKING, AND... MAYBE WE SHOULD END IT.

END IT? PLATONIC SEVERANCE? WHY?

FIRE AND WATER—WE'RE A *BAD MIX*.

I USED TO THINK IT WAS A CASE OF WAITING FOR *YOU* TO CATCH UP WITH *ME*, BUT YOUR LIFE NOW... ALL THE THINGS YOU DO... FIGHTING MONSTERS...

BUT IF YOU REJECT ME YOU'LL BE *PILLORIED!*

?

STIGMATIZED, LAMBASTED, *LOOKED DOWN ON!*

I KNOW, WHICH IS WHY *I* SHOULD DO IT AND NOT YOU. I HAVEN'T BEEN THE BEST OF FRIENDS...

NO.

I WON'T LET YOU. I'M NOT HAVING IT.

WE'RE GOOD. WE'RE DIFFERENT, BUT—BUT THAT'S GOOD.

I SAY WE KEEP GOING.

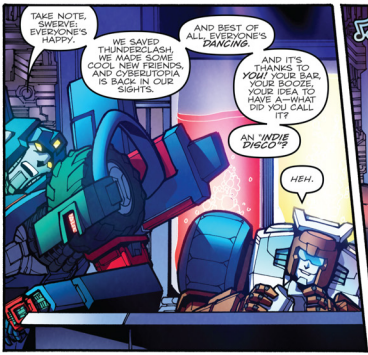
OKAY, BUT JUST SO YOU KNOW...

...YOU WERE *ON FIRE* TODAY.

SWERVE'S
CURRENTLY PLAYING: "WHAT PRESENCE?!" BY ORANGE JUICE
"THE PARTY LINE" BY BELLE & SEBASTIAN
NOT DANCING?
I REFER YOU TO MY TAPPING FOOT.
THERE—THE FIRST SONG ON THE SOUNDTRACK. DON'T ANNOUNCE IT. I WANT IT TO BE A SURPRISE.
"HOW SOON IS NOW?" BY THE SMITHS
QUICK—JUST ONE DANCE! COME ON! DO YOU WANT ME TO BEG?
NO, BECAUSE THAT WOULD BE HIGHLY EMBARRASSING.
THE POWER OF LOVE IS A CURIOUS THING...
"THE POWER OF LOVE" BY HUEY LEWIS AND THE NEWS
SIGHS
ALRIGHT THEN, TAILGATE. ONE DANCE...

EARTHDANCE
"ONLY LOVE CAN BREAK YOUR HEART" BY SAINT ETIENNE
AND THEN WHOMP! I MADE THEM ALL COLLAPSE JUST BY TURNING UP!
JUST. BY TURNING UP.
YES. YES. I WAS THERE.
"LET'S MAKE THIS PRECIOUS" BY DEXYS MIDNIGHT RUNNERS
SO. MEGATRON OR SOUNDWAVE?
WHAT? WHAT KIND OF A QUESTION—
IF YOU HAD TO CHOOSE. IF.
WHAT IS THIS, A SUICIDE ATTEMPT?
I'M SENSING MEGATRON.
I DIDN'T SAY THAT.
OH. LIKE I DON'T NORMALLY EMBARRASS YOU...
WHAT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
NOTHING.
TAILGATE...?

CAN I CUT IN, OR IS THAT NAUGHTY?
"VELOCITY GIRL" BY PRIMAL SCREAM
LOTTY! I THOUGHT YOU'D GONE!
FIRESTAR CHANGED MY MIND. SHE SAID YOU MIGHT STRUGGLE ON YOUR OWN...
SHE WHAT? OH, SHE'S A ONE...


TAKE NOTE, SWERVE: EVERYONE'S HAPPY.
WE SAVED THUNDERCLASH, WE MADE SOME COOL NEW FRIENDS, AND CYBERUTOPIA IS BACK IN OUR SIGHTS.
AND BEST OF ALL, EVERYONE'S DANCING.
AND IT'S THANKS TO YOU! YOUR BAR, YOUR BOOZE, YOUR IDEA TO HAVE A—WHAT DID YOU CALL IT?
AN "INDIE DISCO"?
HEH.

"THE LIGHT POURS OUT OF ME" BY MAGAZINE
I GUESS MY WORK HERE IS DONE.

OH BOY.

KISH

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #42 COVER SUB

by **NICK ROCHE** Colors by **JOSH BURCHAM**

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #43 COVER A

by **ALEX MILNE** Colors by **JOSH PEREZ**

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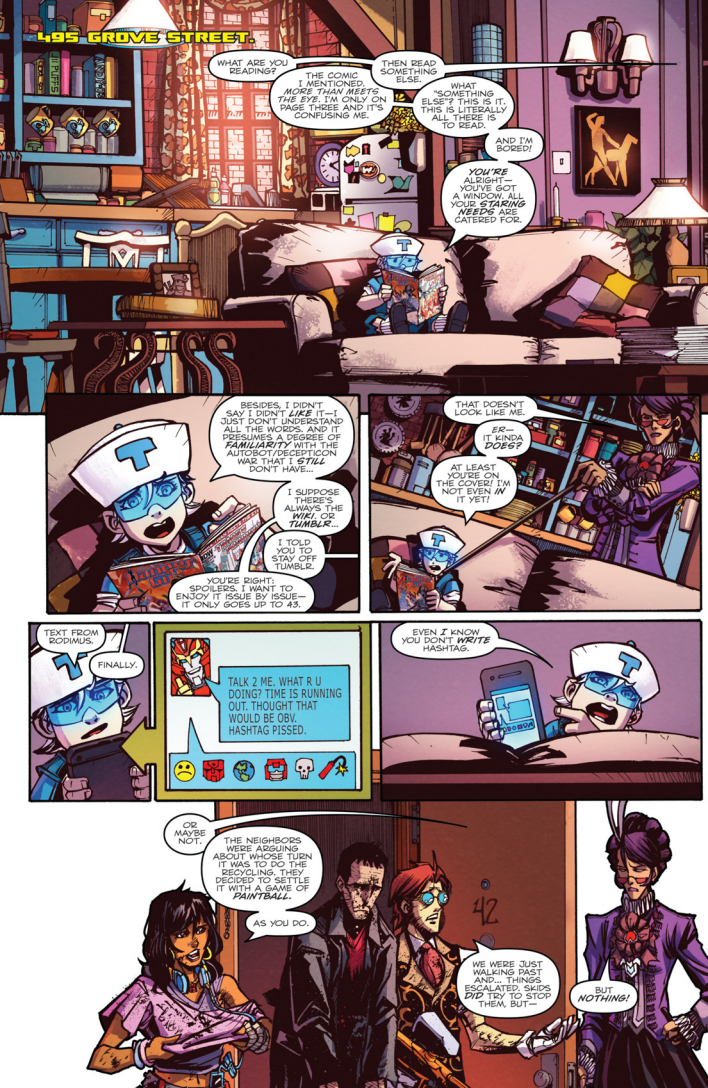
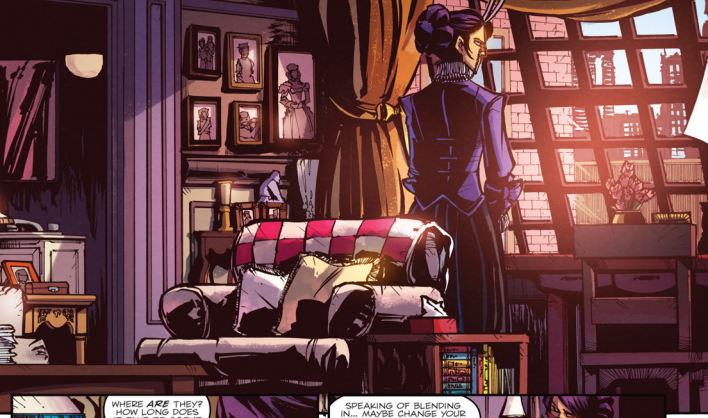
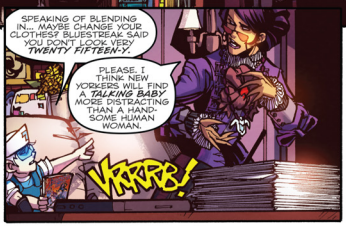
THE TRANSFORMERS

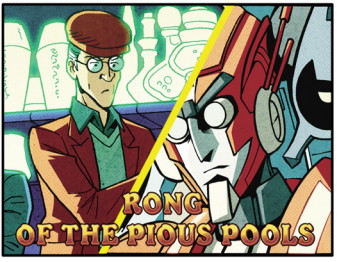

495 GROVE STREET.
WHAT ARE YOU READING?
THE COMIC I MENTIONED *MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE*. I'M ONLY ON PAGE THREE AND IT'S CONFUSING ME.
THEN READ SOMETHING ELSE.
WHAT "SOMETHING ELSE"? THIS IS IT. THIS IS LITERALLY ALL THERE IS TO READ.
AND I'M BORED!
YOU'RE ALRIGHT — YOU'VE GOT A WINDOW. ALL YOUR ***STARING NEEDS*** ARE CATERED FOR.
BESIDES, I DIDN'T SAY I DIDN'T ***LIKE*** IT—I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND ALL THE WORDS. AND IT PRESUMES A DEGREE OF ***FAMILIARITY*** WITH THE AUTOBOT/DECEPTICON WAR THAT I ***STILL*** DON'T HAVE...
I SUPPOSE THERE'S ALWAYS THE ***WIKI***, OR ***TUMBLR***...
I TOLD YOU TO STAY OFF TUMBLR.
YOU'RE RIGHT: SPOILERS. I WANT TO ENJOY IT ISSUE BY ISSUE— IT ONLY GOES UP TO 43.
THAT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ME.
ER— IT KINDA ***DOES?***
AT LEAST YOU'RE ON THE COVER! I'M NOT EVEN ***IN*** IT YET!
TEXT FROM RODIMUS.
FINALLY.
TALK 2 ME. WHAT R U DOING? TIME IS RUNNING OUT. THOUGHT THAT WOULD BE OBV. HASHTAG PISSED.
EVEN *I* KNOW YOU DON'T ***WRITE*** HASHTAG.
OR MAYBE NOT.
THE NEIGHBORS WERE ARGUING ABOUT WHOSE TURN IT WAS TO DO THE RECYCLING. THEY DECIDED TO SETTLE IT WITH A GAME OF ***PAINTBALL***.
AS YOU DO.
WE WERE JUST WALKING PAST AND... THINGS ESCALATED. SKIDS ***DID*** TRY TO STOP THEM, BUT—
BUT ***NOTHING!***

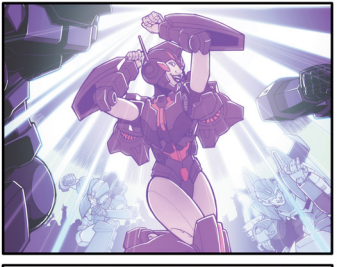


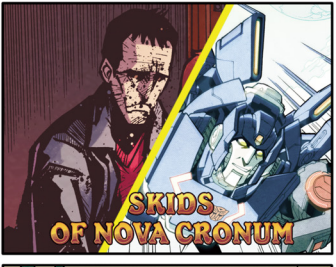


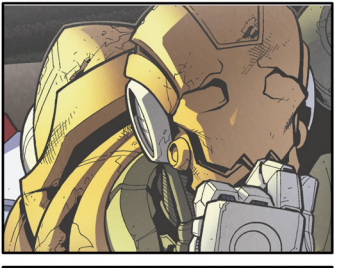
CUE OPENING CREDITS...

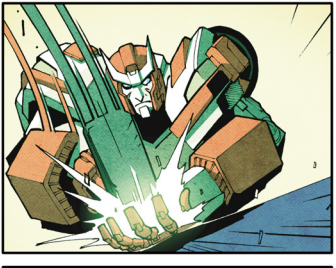
MTMTE
STARRING
TAILGATE
OF RIVETS FIELD
CYCLONUS
OF TETRAHEX
BLUESTREAK
OF PRAXUS

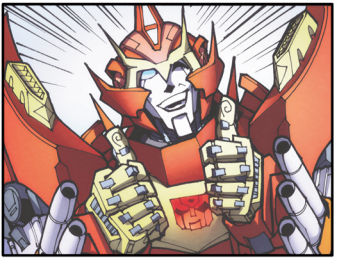












PRODUCED BY
JAMES ROBERTS
ALEX MILNE
BRIAN SHEARER
JOANA LAFUENTE
TOM B. LONG
JOHN BARBER

THE LOST LIGHT, EARLIER.

I REPEAT: WILL ***SWERVE*** PLEASE REPORT TO THE BRIDGE?

THAT WAS YOUR FIRST AND LAST "PLEASE."

WE'RE BEING CHASED BY A PLANET.

COOL.

SORRY, WHAT?

'SUP?

MAINFRAME SPOTTED IT 10 MINUTES AGO. WHENEVER WE ACCELERATE, IT ACCELERATES TOO.

HEY. THAT'S WHAT'S-YOUR-FACE! THAT'S ***EARTH!*** I RECOGNIZE THE—Y'KNOW. THE COLOR SCHEME.

WHAT'S IT DOING ALL THE WAY OUT HERE? AND WHAT'S SWERVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

WE TRIED ***MAKING CONTACT*** AND GOT NOTHING BACK. SO WE STARTED COMBING THE AIRWAVES FOR ***NOISE***: MESSAGES, THREATS, DISTRESS SIGNALS.

WE FOUND SOMETHING. ONE SIGNAL. ONE MESSAGE. BARELY A MINUTE LONG BUT ON A CONSTANT LOOP.

BLASTER?

I FEEL I SHOULD WARN YOU... WHAT YOU'RE ABOUT TO HEAR, IT'S...

IT'S VERY CATCHY.

MAKIN' YOUR WAY ON A QUEST TODAY TAKES EVERYTHIN' YOU GOT

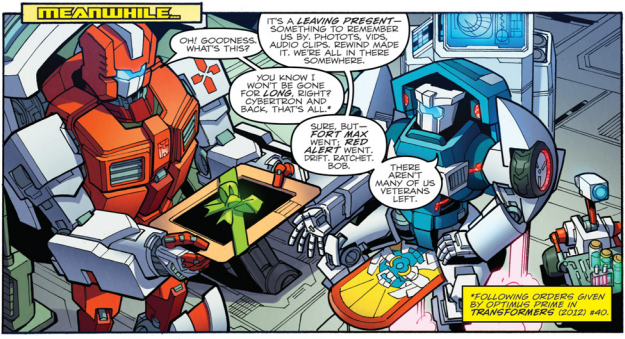
TAKIN' A BREAK FROM ALL THAT ***WAR STUFF*** SURE HAS HELPED A LOT

MAYBE ONE DAY WE'LL FIND THE KNIGHTS BUT 'TIL THEN, YOU WANNA GO

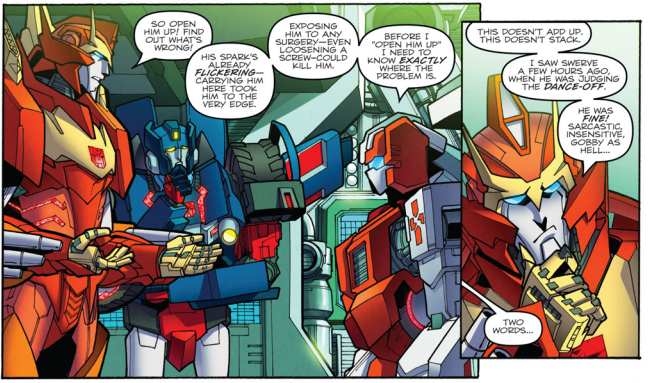
DOWN TO ***D DECK*** AND TO ***SWERVE'S*** YOU'LL HAVE MORE FUN THAN YOU DESERVE

YOU WANNA GO WHERE MEGS WON'T GO WHERE THE DRINKS ALL TASTE THE SAME

YOU WANNA GO WHERE TEN CAN'T EVEN SAY YOUR NAME

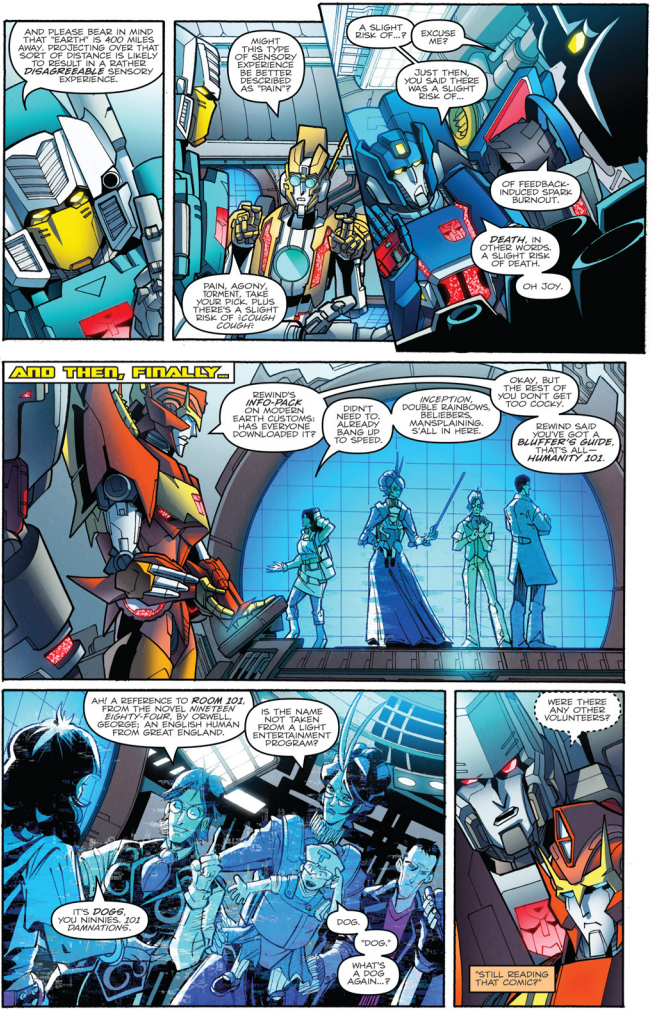


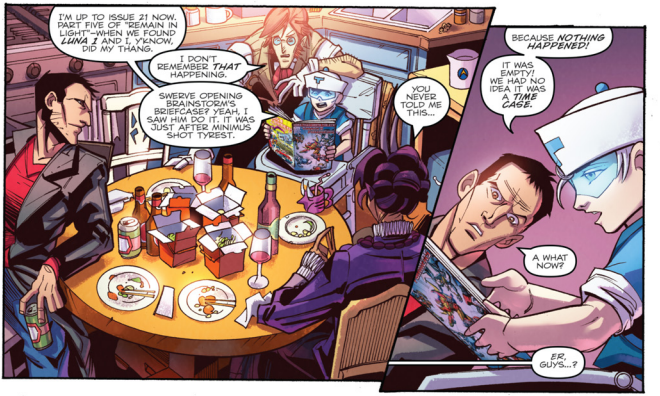
MOMENTS LATER:

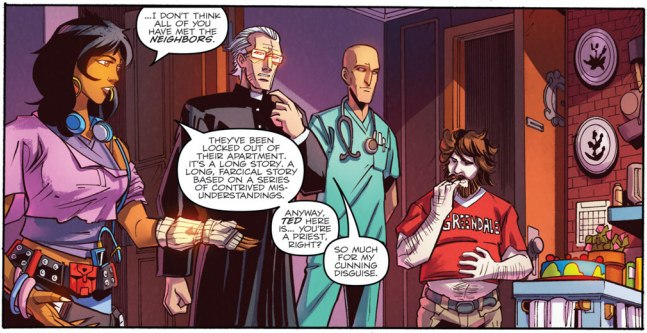


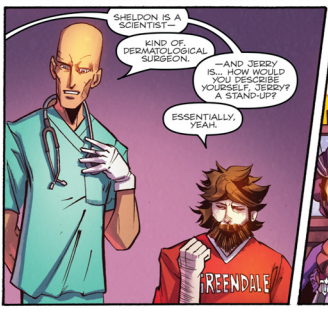
AND IF THAT WASN'T ENOUGH...

BUT HOW IS THAT EVEN POSSIBLE? THE AMOUNT OF ENERGY YOU'D NEED IS PHENOMENAL! NOT TO MENTION THE TIME IT WOULD TAKE TO—TO—TO CONCEPTUALIZE SOMETHING THAT BIG—THAT DETAILED.
LAST TIME I UPDATED MY AVATAR IT TOOK ME THREE DAYS TO GENERATE A NEW SWEATBAND...!
IT LOOKS AS IF ONLY A FRACTION OF THE PLANET IS POPULATED, BUT YES, I TAKE YOUR POINT.
IT'S POPULATED?
BY FAKE HUMANS. AVATARS WITHOUT ANCHORS.
AND YOU THINK SWERVE'S DOWN THERE?
I DO. I THINK THAT INFERNAL SONG WAS SOME SORT OF MULTI-TRACKED, OVERPRODUCED CRY FOR HELP.
SO WHAT'S THE PLAN?
SEVERAL PHONE CALLS LATER...
IT LITERALLY COULDN'T BE SIMPLER:
WE PROJECT OUR OWN HOLOMATTER AVATARS ONTO LIFE-SIZE SIMULACRUM OF EARTH. GO UNDERCOVER, FIND SWERVE'S AVATAR—LAST TIME HE LOOKED SOMETHING LIKE THIS—
—AND, BEARING IN MIND HE MAY BE DISORIENTED, GET HIM TO TELL US WHAT'S KILLING HIM SO THAT FIRST AID CAN PERFORM A LIFE-SAVING OPERATION ON HIS ACTUAL BODY HERE ON THE LOST LIGHT.
GOT IT?
OH COME ON—IT DOESN'T GET ANY MORE STRAIGHTFORWARD.
I WANT YOU FIVE TO SET UP A BASE OF OPERATIONS, DETERMINE WHETHER THE TERRITORY IS HOSTILE, AND AWAIT FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.


AND PLEASE BEAR IN MIND THAT "EARTH" IS 400 MILES AWAY, PROJECTING OVER THAT SORT OF DISTANCE IS LIKELY TO RESULT IN A RATHER *DISAGREEABLE* SENSORY EXPERIENCE.
MIGHT THIS TYPE OF SENSORY EXPERIENCE BE BETTER DESCRIBED AS "PAIN"?
PAIN, AGONY, TORMENT, TAKE YOUR PICK. PLUS THERE'S A SLIGHT RISK OF *COUGH COUGH*.
A SLIGHT RISK OF...?
EXCUSE ME?
JUST THEN, YOU SAID THERE WAS A SLIGHT RISK OF...
OF FEEDBACK-INDUCED SPARK BURNOUT.
DEATH, IN OTHER WORDS. A SLIGHT RISK OF DEATH.
OH JOY.
AND THEN, FINALLY...
REWIND'S *INFO-PACK* ON MODERN EARTH CUSTOMS: HAS EVERYONE DOWNLOADED IT?
DIDN'T NEED TO. ALREADY BANG UP TO SPEED.
INCEPTION, DOUBLE RAINBOWS, BELIEBERS, MANSPLAINING. S'ALL IN HERE.
OKAY, BUT THE REST OF YOU DON'T GET TOO COCKY.
REWIND SAID YOU'VE GOT A *BLUFFER'S GUIDE*. THAT'S ALL. *HUMANITY 101*.
AH! A REFERENCE TO *ROOM 101*, FROM THE NOVEL *NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR*, BY ORWELL, *GEORGE*: AN ENGLISH HUMAN FROM GREAT ENGLAND.
IS THE NAME NOT TAKEN FROM A LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAM?
IT'S *DOGS*, YOU NINNIES. *101 DAMNATIONS*.
DOG.
"DOG."
WHAT'S A DOG AGAIN...?
WERE THERE ANY OTHER VOLUNTEERS?
"STILL READING THAT COMIC?"


I'M UP TO ISSUE 21 NOW, PART FIVE OF "REMAIN IN LIGHT"—WHEN WE FOUND *LUNA 1* AND I, Y'KNOW, DID MY THANG.
I DON'T REMEMBER *THAT* HAPPENING.
SWERVE OPENING BRAINSTORM'S BRIEFCASE? YEAH, I SAW HIM DO IT. IT WAS JUST AFTER MINIMUS SHOT TYRESI.
YOU NEVER TOLD ME THIS...
BECAUSE *NOTHING HAPPENED!*
IT WAS EMPTY! WE HAD NO IDEA IT WAS A *TIME CAGE.*
A WHAT NOW?
ER, GUYS...?


...I DON'T THINK ALL OF YOU HAVE MET THE *NEIGHBORS.*
THEY'VE BEEN LOCKED OUT OF THEIR APARTMENT. IT'S A LONG STORY. A LONG, FARCICAL STORY BASED ON A SERIES OF CONTRIVED MIS-UNDERSTANDINGS.
ANYWAY, *TED* HERE IS... YOU'RE A PRIEST, RIGHT?
SO MUCH FOR MY CUNNING DISGUISE.
GREENDALE


SHELDON IS A SCIENTIST—
KIND OF. DERMATOLOGICAL SURGEON.
—AND JERRY IS... HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF, JERRY? A STAND-UP?
ESSENTIALLY, YEAH.
GREENDALE

WE'RE NOT BROTHERS, BEFORE YOU ASK.
BROTHERS?
A LOT OF PEOPLE THINK WE LOOK ALIKE.
THEY'RE PROBABLY INSULTING YOU. WELL, TWO OF YOU.
GREENDALE

CAN YOU IMAGINE BEING RELATED TO THESE TWO? I'D BE STRAIGHT ON THE PHONE TO *SWITZERLAND*. "PREPARE THE LETHAL INJECTION!"

I FIND THAT SOMEWHAT OFFENSIVE.

AH, I'M ONLY JOKING. THAT'S WHAT WE DO! JOKE AROUND!

GREENDALE

AH YES, "JOKING AROUND." LIKE THE TIME YOU SABOTAGED MY *APPOINTMENTS BOOK*...

THAT WAS AN ACCIDENT! A HAPPY ACCIDENT!

I GAVE MRS. SIMPSON *SUCTION-ASSISTED LIPOSUCTION*.

SHE'D ONLY POPPED IN TO ASK ABOUT HER ECZEMA!

SHE WASN'T EVEN *OVERWEIGHT*; BY THE TIME I'D FINISHED SHE WEIGHED LESS THAN A WATERMELON. *AND* SHE STILL HAD ECZEMA.

AND LET'S NOT FORGET LAST WEEK, WHEN YOU TRICKED ME INTO USING *CARBONATED HOLY WATER*.

SO?

SO WHEN I BAPTIZED THE BLUTH BABY HER HEAD STARTING *FIZZING*. HER PARENTS THOUGHT SHE WAS *POSSESSED*!

THEY SAW THE FUNNY SIDE, DIDN'T THEY?

WHO, THE BLUTHS, OR THE EXORCIST? BECAUSE EITHER WAY, *NO, THEY DIDN'T*.

WELL, IF YOU HATE *LIVING* WITH ME SO MUCH, WHY DON'T YOU TROT OFF AND BECOME A *MISSIONARY*—THAT'S WHAT YOU ALWAYS *SAY* YOU'RE GONNA DO. MAYBE YOUR *FAITH* ISN'T UP TO IT.

HEY—AT LEAST TED AND I DO SOMETHING *USEFUL*.

USEFUL? YOU MAKE FAT PEOPLE THIN AND APPLY OINTMENTS—YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY *CURING DISEASES*, ARE YOU?

SKIN CANCER! IT'S ON MY *TO DO* LIST!

GUYS! COULD YOU ALL *PLEASE* SHUT THE HELL UP!

HERE.

YOUR PHONE'S RINGING.

BLUESTREAK? IT'S ME, RODIMUS.
YOU SOUND DIFFERENT.
THAT'S BECAUSE I'M IN HUMAN MODE. WE'VE JUST ARRIVED: ME, NAUTICA, AND NIGHTBEAT, AND MEGATRON'S... SOMEWHERE.
WHERE ARE YOU?
WE'RE STILL IN THE APARTMENT! TAILGATE REPLIED TO YOUR TEXT AND YOU SAID WAIT FOR ORDERS!
OKAY, YEAH, SORRY—IT'S ALL BEEN RATHER HECTIC BACK AT BASE. SWERVE'S DIPPING AND IT'S ALL HANDS TO THE PUMP. FULL DEPLOYMENT.
RIGHT, SO BEFORE WE GET STARTED, WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SWEARTH?
SORRY, "SWEARTH"...?
"SWERVE" PLUS "EARTH". I INVENTED IT.
...
WHY IS THAT FUNNY?
I DIDN'T LAUGH.
I HEARD PEOPLE LAUGHING. LOTS OF PEOPLE. ARE YOU HAVING A PARTY?
OH WAIT—THAT'LL BE THE CANNED LAUGHTER.
THE WHAT?
"SWEARTH" ISN'T LIKE NORMAL PLANETS. IT'S... HOW CAN I PUT THIS? IT'S GOT ITS OWN LAUGHTER TRACK.

THERE IT IS AGAIN! I DIDN'T EVEN SAY ANYTHING FUNNY!
YOU PROBABLY MADE A FACE. REACTIONS GET BIG LAUGHS TOO, AND DON'T BE FREAKED OUT IF YOU WALK INTO A ROOM AND THERE'S A ROUND OF APPLAUSE AND CHEERING.
EH, THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS NORMALLY.
BLAME SWERVE—HE'S OBSESSED WITH SITCOMS. I THINK HE'S—I DUNNO. IT'S LIKE HE'S MADE THIS WORLD IN THEIR IMAGE.
LOOKS NORMAL TO ME.
CANNED LAUGHER ASIDE, IT'S PRETTY SUBTLE. LIKE, ALL OF THE APARTMENTS ARE HUGE AND OPEN-PLAN... AND FROM IN HERE THE WORLD OUTSIDE LOOKS REALLY UNCONVINCING.
PEOPLE ACT DIFFERENTLY, TOO. EVERYONE MAKES JOKES, BUT NO ONE EVER LAUGHS. AND NO ONE DOES A DAY'S WORK BECAUSE THEY'RE TOO BUSY HAVING... ESCAPADES.
LIKE, THESE THREE GUYS ACROSS THE HALL FROM US? LAST WEEK THEY HAD TO DISGUISE THEMSELVES AS ROCK STARS TO STEAL A GOLD DISC SO THEY COULD PAY OFF THEIR RENT ARREARS.
IT'S WEIRD AND FARCICAL AND—AND UNREALISTIC.
UNREALISTIC. HMM.
WOULD YOU SAY IT'S MORE OR LESS UNREALISTIC THAN BATTLING NANOBOTS INSIDE ULTRA MAGNUS'S MOUTH? OR BEING ATTACKED BY A GIANT THUMB? OR FIGHTING INVISIBLE, CHARISMA-POWERED PARASITES?
OR VISITING SITCOMWORLD, FOR THAT MATTER.
A PLANET WITH ITS OWN THEME TUNE.
NO STANDING ON ESCALATORS. ESCALATORS MOVE FASTER THAN YOU THINK. 7AM - 6PM MON-FRI
SHOUT MESSAGES OVERHEAD
WALK ON RIGHT
WELL, I—
SORRY, BLUE. GOTTA GO. MEGATRON'S JUST TURNED UP AND HE'S LOOKING CONFUSED.
JUST GET OUT THERE AND SEARCH, OKAY?
THERE YOU ARE!
I WAS AFRAID YOU'D WANDERED INTO TRAFFIC.

THIS IS NEW TO ME.
YOU'VE NEVER USED AN AVATAR BEFORE?
NEVER HAD THE NEED OR THE INCLINATION.
I SUPPOSE THESE ARE A LITTLE DIFFERENT. BRAINSTORM AND RUNG REFINED THE PROGRAM—MADE IT MORE INTUITIVE, MORE... REFLECTIVE OF YOUR PSYCHE.
NICE WALKING STICK. BY THE WAY.
WHAT NOW?
SWERVE'S A BARTENDER, SO WE HIT THE BARS.
THERE'S ONE ROUND THE CORNER—WEIRD NAME. THE JUMPING SHARK OR SOMETHING. BUT KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN—
—WE DON'T WANT TO MISS ANYTHING SIGNIFICANT.

WHY AM I EVEN HELPING YOU GUYS? IT'S NOT AS IF YOU'RE EVEN READY.
SAY WHAT?
NOTHING. BUT THE MOMENT THE OTHERS ARE READY, I'M GONE...
TRY NOT TO WORRY, SKIDS—WE'LL FIND HIM. YOU FOUND HIM ONCE ALREADY—
—MAYBE YOU'VE GOT A KNACK FOR IT.
D'YOU KNOW WHERE I FOUND HIM?
IN HIS HAB SUITE?
YEAH, BUT D'YOU KNOW WHICH HAB SUITE? D'YOU KNOW WHAT NUMBER IT IS? D'YOU KNOW WHAT DECK IT'S ON?
UM... NO. I CAN'T SAY I DO.
I DIDN'T EITHER. ISN'T THAT AWFUL? I'M PROBABLY HIS CLOSEST FRIEND AND I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHERE HE LIVED!
BUT YOU FOUND HIM IN THE END...
ROOM 43. I REMEMBERED HE USED TO SHARE WITH RED ALERT, AND I KNEW WHERE RED LIVED, SO...

SO YOU'VE NEVER HAD OCCASION TO VISIT HIM AT HOME. THERE ARE WORSE CRIMES...
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. WHEN I FOUND HIM HE WAS FACEDOWN ON THE FLOOR, IN A TOOL OF HIS OWN LUBRICANT. FIRST AID SAID THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF—
SEVERE NEGLECT. SELF-NEGLECT.
I MEAN LOOK AT HIM: JOINT FREEZE... MINOR LEAKAGE... LOW LEVEL FORM FATIGUE...
"HE'D BEEN IN HIS ROOM FOR MONTHS AND NOBODY KNEW."

WE'D SEE HIM IN THE BAR FROM TIME TO TIME—WELL WE THOUGHT IT WAS HIM—SO I GUESS—INASMUCH AS WE THOUGHT ABOUT IT AT ALL—I GUESS WE ASSUMED EVERYTHING WAS OKAY.
BUT STILL, Y'KNOW? IF I'D GONE TO HIS ROOM—JUST TO CHAT... IF I DONE THAT ONCE IN A WHILE I MIGHT'VE REALIZED HE WAS SICK BEFORE THINGS GOT... CRITICAL.
OH YES!
CHECK IT OUT, YOU GUYS—
I SKIPPED TO THE LAST ISSUE OF MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE—ISSUE 43—AND IT'S THIS STORY! THE SWERVE DISAPPEARS STORY.
AND...?
AND LOOK! THERE'S A STORY SO FAR PAGE THAT EXPLAINS EVERYTHING!

PREVIOUSLY

FINALLY! I SUPPOSE YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE HECK'S GOING ON.

EVERYTHING'S BEEN ABOUT ***ME*** FOR A CHANGE. ***CENTER STAGE.*** THANK YOU VERY MUCH. I'M NOT WELL, Y'SEE? I MIGHT EVEN DIE.

...

THAT'S YOUR REACTION? OR DOES YOUR FACE NOT DO "DISTRAUGHT"?

SO ANYWAY, I'VE GOT A ***MYSTERY ILLNESS*** AND IT'S PUT ME IN A KIND OF ***POP-CULTURE COMA.*** MY SOMEWHAT ***SURPRISING*** RESPONSE TO THIS TURN OF EVENTS IS TO USE MY HOLOMATTER GENERATOR TO CREATE A REPLICA OF EARTH INFORMED BY TRADITIONAL ***SITCOM TROPES.***

I KNOW, YOU'RE THINKING, "WHY WOULD HE DO THAT? WHY WOULD ***ANYONE*** DO THAT? AND ***HOW?***"

WELL, A WHILE AGO I DID A COUPLE OF THINGS WHICH WERE A ***TEENSY*** BIT NAUGHTY.

FIRSTLY, I ACTIVATED BRAINSTORM'S ***META-BOMB,*** WHICH I NOW REALIZE ***MAY*** HAVE HAD AN EFFECT ON ME.

FOR EXAMPLE, QUITE OFTEN THESE DAYS I FIND MYSELF THINKING WE'RE ALL JUST LARGER-THAN-LIFE CHARACTERS IN AN INCREASINGLY ODD COMIC BOOK.

(SERIOUSLY—SOMETIMES I FIND MYSELF HAVING ONE-SIDED CONVERSATIONS WITH IMAGINARY PEOPLE JUST TO BRING READERS UP TO SPEED...)

SECONDLY—AND THIS REALLY ***IS*** NAUGHTY—I OPENED BRAINSTORM'S BRIEFCASE WHEN NO ONE WAS LOOKING. I THOUGHT IT WAS ***EMPTY,*** BUT THE OTHER DAY TAILGATE SAID—TOP SECRET—THAT IT'S ACTUALLY PART OF A ***TIME MACHINE.***

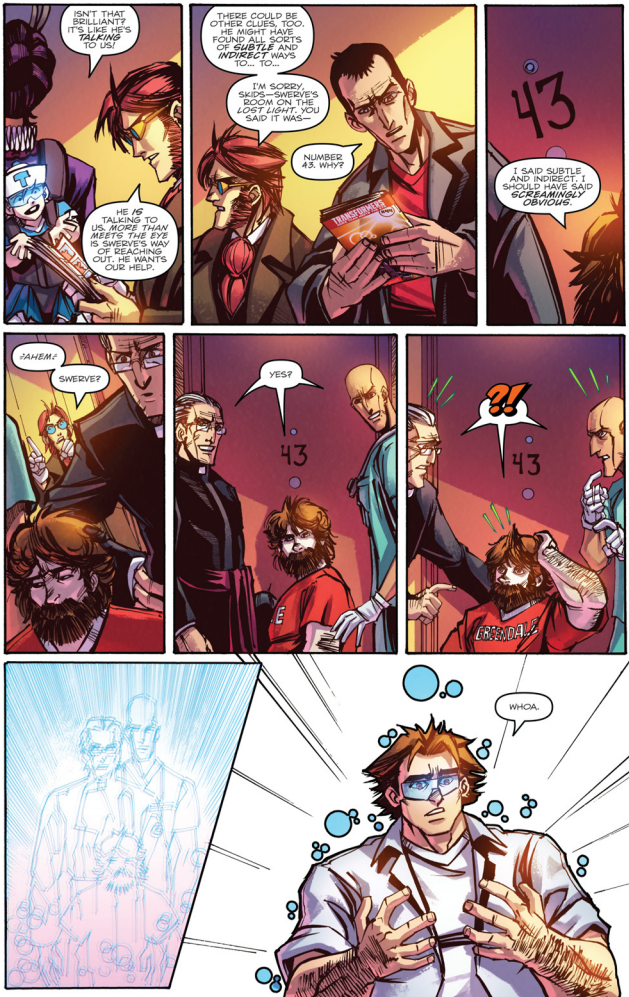
NOW I THINK THAT OPENING IT DID WEIRD THINGS TO ME.

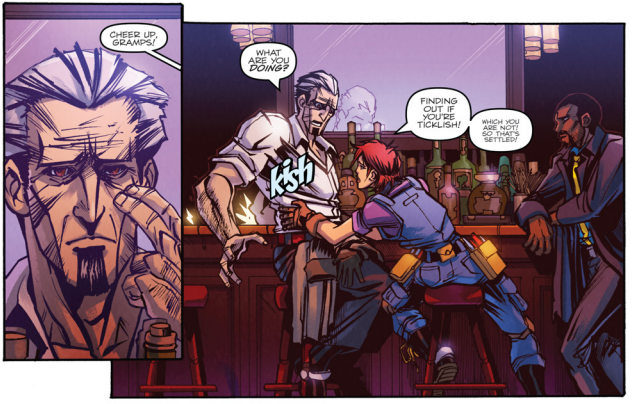
I MEAN, WHAT IF IT CREATED SOME SORT OF ***REITERATIVE TIME LOOP*** INSIDE ME? AND WHAT IF THAT TIME LOOP ENABLED ME TO ***RE-ROUTE ENERGY*** THROUGH MY HOLOMATTER GENERATOR AGAIN AND AGAIN, GIVING ME THE POWER—AND THE TIME—TO CREATE PLANET-SIZED HOLOGRAMS?

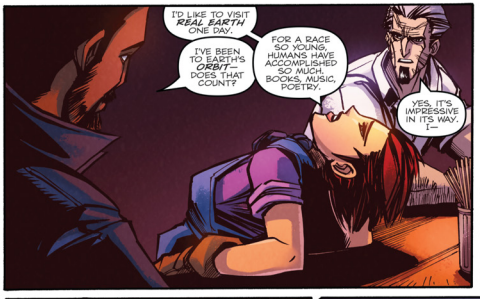
WHAT'S THAT? ***"UTTERLY IMPLAUSIBLE"***, YOU SAY? EVEN MORE FAR-FETCHED THAN THE CHARISMA MONSTERS? WELL, GO AHEAD—BUT THE MORE YOU QUESTION THE SCIENCE, THE MORE I'M GONNA LAMPSHADE IT.

SO THERE WE GO, RIGHT NOW I'M HIDING ON "EARTH"... EITHER WAITING TO BE FOUND OR WANTING TO STAY HIDDEN. I CAN'T MAKE UP MY MIND.

(AND BETWEEN YOU AND ME, I'M NOT ENTIRELY SURE WHETHER ***ANY*** OF THIS IS REAL...)


ISN'T THAT BRILLIANT? IT'S LIKE HE'S TALKING TO US!
HE IS TALKING TO US. MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE IS SWERVE'S WAY OF REACHING OUT. HE WANTS OUR HELP.
THERE COULD BE OTHER CLUES, TOO. HE MIGHT HAVE FOUND ALL SORTS OF SUBTLE AND INDIRECT WAYS TO... TO...
I'M SORRY, SKIDS—SWERVE'S ROOM ON THE LOST LIGHT. YOU SAID IT WAS—
NUMBER 43. WHY?
TRANSFORMERS
43
I SAID SUBTLE AND INDIRECT. I SHOULD HAVE SAID SCREAMINGLY OBVIOUS.
AHEM.
SWERVE?
YES?
43
?!
43
WHOA.

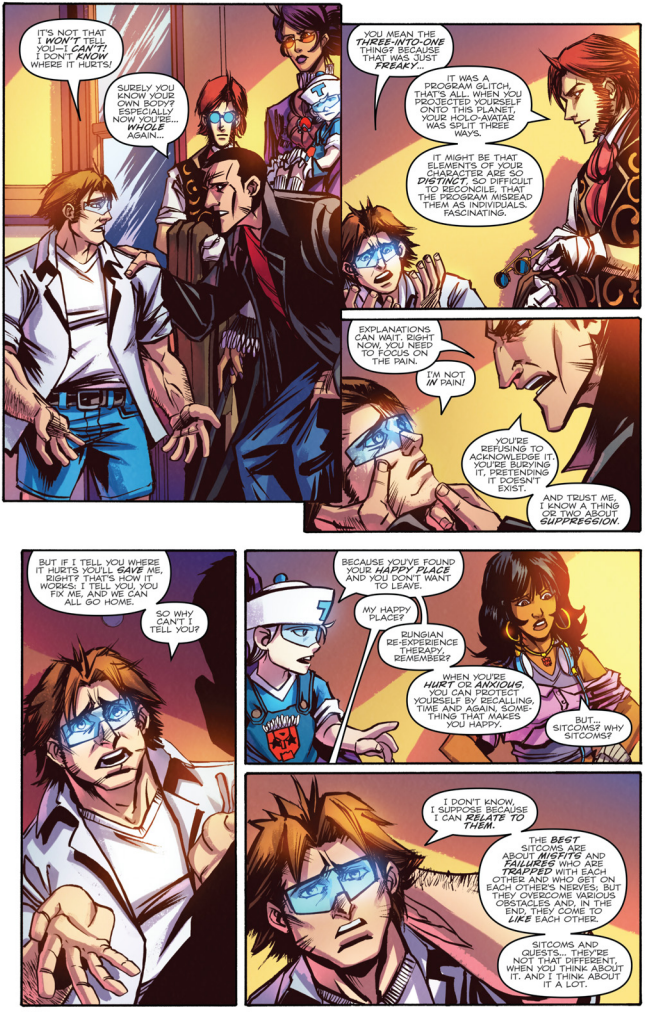

CHEER UP, GRAMPS!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
KISH
FINDING OUT IF YOU'RE TICKLISH!
WHICH YOU ARE NOT! ARE THAT'S SETTLED?


I'D LIKE TO VISIT REAL EARTH! ONE DAY.
I'VE BEEN TO EARTH'S ORBIT— DOES THAT COUNT?
FOR A RACE SO YOUNG, HUMANS HAVE ACCOMPLISHED SO MUCH. BOOKS, MUSIC, POETRY.
YES, IT'S IMPRESSIVE IN IT'S WAY. I—

—OW.

IT'S ONLY A CUT.
FRAGILE CREATURES, AREN'T THEY?
HERE WE GO. JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE WEAK DOESN'T MEAN—
I DIDN'T SAY WEAK. I SAID FRAGILE.

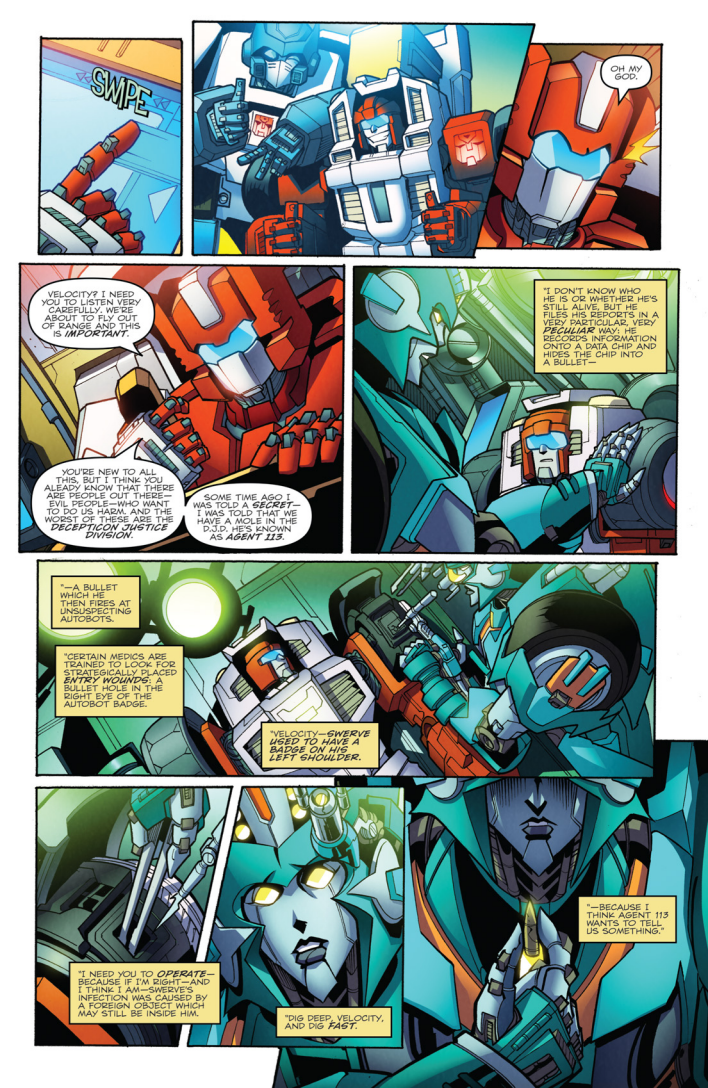
GOOD NEWS. TEAM CYCLONUS HAS FOUND SWERVE.
I SENSE A "BUT"...
HE'S REFUSING TO TELL THEM WHERE HE'S INJURED.


IT'S NOT THAT I WON'T TELL YOU—! CAN'T! I DON'T KNOW WHERE IT HURTS!
SURELY YOU KNOW YOUR OWN BODY? ESPECIALLY NOW YOU'RE... WHOLE AGAIN...
YOU MEAN THE THREE-INTO-ONE THING? BECAUSE THAT WAS JUST FREAKY...
IT WAS A PROGRAM GLITCH, THAT'S ALL. WHEN YOU PROJECTED YOURSELF ONTO THIS PLANET, YOUR HOLO-AVATAR WAS SPLIT THREE WAYS.
IT MIGHT BE THAT ELEMENTS OF YOUR CHARACTER ARE SO DISTINCT, SO DIFFICULT TO RECONCILE, THAT THE PROGRAM MISREAD THEM AS INDIVIDUALS. FASCINATING.
EXPLANATIONS CAN WAIT. RIGHT NOW, YOU NEED TO FOCUS ON THE PAIN.
I'M NOT IN PAIN!
YOU'RE REFUSING TO ACKNOWLEDGE IT. YOU'RE BURYING IT. PRETENDING IT DOESN'T EXIST.
AND TRUST ME. I KNOW A THING OR TWO ABOUT SUPPRESSION.
BUT IF I TELL YOU WHERE IT HURTS YOU'LL SAVE ME, RIGHT? THAT'S HOW IT WORKS: I TELL YOU, YOU FIX ME, AND WE CAN ALL GO HOME.
SO WHY CAN'T I TELL YOU?
BECAUSE YOU'VE FOUND YOUR HAPPY PLACE AND YOU DON'T WANT TO LEAVE.
MY HAPPY PLACE?
RUNGIAN RE-EXPERIENCE THERAPY, REMEMBER?
WHEN YOU'RE HURT OR ANXIOUS, YOU CAN PROTECT YOURSELF BY RECALLING, TIME AND AGAIN, SOME-THING THAT MAKES YOU HAPPY.
BUT... SITCOMS? WHY SITCOMS?
I DON'T KNOW. I SUPPOSE BECAUSE I CAN RELATE TO THEM.
THE BEST SITCOMS ARE ABOUT MISFITS AND FAILURES WHO ARE TRAPPED WITH EACH OTHER AND WHO GET ON EACH OTHER'S NERVES; BUT THEY OVERCOME VARIOUS OBSTACLES AND, IN THE END, THEY COME TO LIKE EACH OTHER.
SITCOMS AND QUESTS... THEY'RE NOT THAT DIFFERENT, WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT. AND I THINK ABOUT IT A LOT.

EXCEPT UP THERE, ON THE LOST LIGHT, IT'S NOT REALLY LIKE A SITCOM—NOT ANY MORE. I'M NOT FEELING CLOSER TO PEOPLE. I'M FEELING FURTHER APART.
WHEN MEGATRON CAME ON BOARD, EVERYTHING CHANGED. I DUNNO. MAYBE IT'S JUST ME, BUT... IT FEELS LIKE A DIFFERENT SHOW NOW. AND I DON'T THINK I'M ONE OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS ANYMORE.
AND THIS IS WHY YOU RETREATED TO YOUR ROOM...?
LOOK, I DON'T EXPECT TO WIN ANY POPULARITY PRIZES. I KNOW I'M NOT THE EASIEST GUY TO LIKE AND I SUPPOSE I KICK AGAINST THAT BY EMBRACING IT.
YOUR HUMOR IS CRUEL AND USUALLY AT OTHER PEOPLE'S EXPENSE. YOU'RE A PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE RUMORMONGER WHO AVOIDS MEANINGFUL WORK, AND YOUR "PRANKS" ARE FOOLISH AND OFTEN DANGEROUS.
JEEZ, THANKS FOR THE PEP TALK...
AND YET YOU CLEARLY HAVE SOMETHING GOING FOR YOU, BECAUSE HERE WE ARE. WE CAME LOOKING FOR YOU.
THANK YOU. GOOD TO KNOW I CAN FILL FIVE SEATS AT MY FUNERAL...
NO. YOU DON'T REALIZE WHAT I'M SAYING.
EVERYONE CAME LOOKING FOR YOU. ALL OF US. EVERYONE ON THE BOARD THE LOST LIGHT.
"ULTRA MAGNUS...
"...CHROMEDOME...
"... REWIND...
"... AND TWO HUNDRED MORE. EVEN THOUGH IT HURTS THEM TO PROJECT THIS FAR—EVEN THOUGH IT MEANS PUTTING THEIR LIVES AT RISK..."
...THEY'RE ALL OUT THERE, SPREAD OUT ACROSS THE CITY, ACROSS THE WORLD, DESPERATE TO FIND YOU.
REALLY?
YES. THEY NEED TO KNOW WHERE YOU KEEP THE KEYS TO THE BAR.

TETRAHEXIAN HUMOR.
VERY DRY.
SWERVE...? YOU'RE BLEEDING...
MY SHOULDER!
I THINK IT'S TIME WE WRAPPED THIS STORY
HAVE WE HAD OUR 22 PAGES?
IT'S A SITCOM, TAILGATE. 22 MINUTES.

LATER.
NO. WE FLEW PAST IT JUST NOW. "GHOST EARTH." YEAH. IT'S DEFINITELY FADING AWAY...
...WHICH I THINK MEANS YOU DID IT. YOU CURED HIM.
WAS IT WHAT WE THOUGHT?
A RUST INFECTION. YES—ORIGINATING IN HIS LEFT SHOULDER—THE HUMERUS, JUST WIDE OF THE KNUCKLE JOINT. IT WOULDVE TAKEN YEARS FOR IT TO TAIT HIS ENERGON STREAM.
HOWD HE GET INFECTED?
A SCRATCH? A STABBING? HE MUSTVE PATCHED HIMSELF UP WITHOUT CLEANING THE WOUND.
GOOD LUCK FROM YOUR PATIENTS FRIENDS
I'VE... NEVER SAVED A LIFE BEFORE. THAT WAS MY FIRST TIME—AND I CAN'T STOP SMILING.
THANK YOU. THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME THE OPPORTUNITY—AND COME BACK SOON...
ANYWAY, I INJECTED FORTIFIED NUCLEON INTO HIS SHOULDER AND DETOXED HIM.
ATTACK THE ROOT, KILL THE WEED. GOOD WORK.
FIRST AID...?
"...WE DOCTORS HAVE TO STICK TOGETHER."


SWIPE
OH MY GOD.
VELOCITY? I NEED YOU TO LISTEN VERY CAREFULLY. WE'RE ABOUT TO FLY OUT OF RANGE AND THIS IS *IMPORTANT*.
YOU'RE NEW TO ALL THIS, BUT I THINK YOU ALEADY KNOW THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE—EVIL PEOPLE—WHO WANT TO DO US HARM. AND THE WORST OF THESE ARE THE *DECEPTICON JUSTICE DIVISION*.
SOME TIME AGO I WAS TOLD A *SECRET*. I WAS TOLD THAT WE HAVE A MOLE IN THE D.J.D. HE'S KNOWN AS *AGENT 113*.
"I DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS OR WHETHER HE'S STILL ALIVE, BUT HE FILES HIS REPORTS IN A VERY PARTICULAR, VERY *PECULIAR* WAY. HE RECORDS INFORMATION ONTO A DATA CHIP AND HIDES THE CHIP INTO A BULLET—
"—A BULLET WHICH HE THEN FIRES AT UNSUSPECTING AUTOBOTS.
"CERTAIN MEDICS ARE TRAINED TO LOOK FOR STRATEGICALLY PLACED *ENTRY WOUNDS*: A BULLET HOLE IN THE RIGHT EYE OF THE AUTOBOT BADGE.
"VELOCITY—*SWERVE USED TO HAVE A BADGE ON HIS LEFT SHOULDER*.
"I NEED YOU TO *OPERATE*—BECAUSE IF I'M RIGHT—AND I THINK I AM—SWERVE'S INFECTION WAS CAUSED BY A FOREIGN OBJECT WHICH MAY STILL BE INSIDE HIM.
"DIG DEEP, VELOCITY, AND DIG *FAST*.
"—BECAUSE I THINK AGENT 113 WANTS TO TELL US SOMETHING."

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #44 COVER A

by **ALEX MILNE** Colors by **JOSH PEREZ**

THE NOT KNOWING

"THE *NECROBOT!* THE *GATEKEEPER!* THE *MUTE NEUTRAL!*

"CLERIC, COURIER, COMFORTER... THE DENT IN THE PALM OF HIS HALLOWED HAND A *TEAR-SNAPPED TESTAMENT* TO THE BILLIONS OF DYING SPARKS THAT HE'S FERRIED FROM THIS WORLD TO THE NEXT.

"APPOINTED BY *PRIMUS* TO SANCTIFY THE CORPSES OF HIS PROGENY AND CONVEY THEIR SACRED ESSENCE TO THE *AFTERSPARK*, HE ALONE CAN FIND THE *LIGHT WITHIN THE LIGHT!* THE SPIRIT WITHIN THE SPIRIT! THE *SOUL* WITHIN THE FOR GOD'S *SAKE* RODIMUS, YOU'LL HAVE SOMEONE'S *EYE* OUT WITH THAT TABLE LEG!"

RODIMUS! ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME?

RODIMUS. I SAID ARE YOU—

RODIMUS.

I'M *LISTENING!* SOMETHING ABOUT THE NECROBOT, SOMETHING *FLORID*. WHAT MADE YOU THINK I WASN'T LISTENING?

THE WHISTLING.

IT'S AN *AID TO CONCENTRATION...!*

DOOR.

?

I'M BALANCING A PIECE OF OFFICE FURNITURE ON MY HEAD. PLEASE OPEN THE DOOR.

YOU KNOW, I CAN JUST ABOUT ACCEPT THAT THE *D.J.D.** WAS INFILTRATED BY AN AUTOBOT...

...WHAT I FIND *BIZARRE* IS THAT THIS *AGENT 113*[1] THINKS IT PRACTICAL TO DELIVER HIS FIELD REPORTS BY FIRING BULLET-SHAPED DATA-SLUGS INTO *THREE-FINGERED METALLURGISTS*.

*THE DECEPTICON JUSTICE DIVISION.

IT'S NOT *EXCLUSIVELY* METALLURGISTS. WHEN I SAID THAT, I DIDN'T... I WAS ATTEMPTING TO MAKE A JOKE.

YES—I KNOW—I WAS *RUNNING WITH IT*. THERE'S A LOT OF BANTER ON THIS SHIP. I THOUGHT I WAS READY TO TAKE THE PLUNGE.

I THINK WE'VE BOTH LEARNT SOMETHING FROM THIS.

"AGENT 113"...

IS THE CODENAME SIGNIFICANT?

KNOWING PROWL, PROBABLY.

I'M GUESSING... *VOS*.

I'M RIGHT, AGENT 13 ALTHOUGH HOW HE CAN FIRE A GUN WITH THOSE *CLAWS* OF HIS...

I'M IMPRESSED. HOW DID YOU KNOW IT WAS—

WHOA! WAIT! HEY! *SOMEONE'S* PLAYING FAST AND LOOSE WITH PRIVILEGED INFORMATION...!

IF YOU CAUGHT *ME* SPILLING THAT MANY BEANS YOU'D GIVE ME A *FRIGGING PONY* SO EPIC, SO PROTRACTED—SO NARRATIVELY DENSE—IT WOULD HAVE SUBPLOTS, CALLBACKS, AND A FINALE THAT WOULD PROVIDE CLOSURE WHILST LEAVING THE DOOR OPEN FOR FUTURE *TELLINGS OFF*.

FIRSTLY, THERE'S NO WAY THAT WAS AD LIBBED.

SECONDLY, IT'S NOT PRIVILEGED INFORMATION—NOT ANYMORE. EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT AGENT 113.

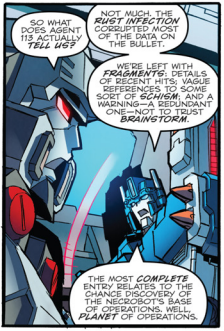
REALLY? SINCE WHEN?

REC

"SINCE *VELOCITY* UPLOADED THE CONTENTS OF THE BULLET IN FRONT OF *SWERVE*."

"AH. THAT WOULD EXPLAIN WHY TODAY'S COCKTAIL'S CALLED *A SHOT IN THE ARM* AND COSTS 1.13 SHANIX."

BESIDES, WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT AGENT 113 IS *DEAD*.
IN HIS REPORT HE TALKS ABOUT BEING COMPROMISED...
AND I'M TOLD THAT THE VOS, WHO ATTACKED THE OTHER *LOST LIGHT*, WAS SOMEONE *NEW*, A REPLACEMENT.
*SEE ISSUES #32 AND #33.


SO WHAT DOES AGENT 113 ACTUALLY *TELL US*?
NOT MUCH. THE *RUST INFECTION* CORRUPTED MOST OF THE DATA ON THE BULLET.
WE'RE LEFT WITH *FRAGMENTS*: DETAILS OF RECENT HITS, VAGUE REFERENCES TO SOME SORT OF *SCHISM*, AND A WARNING—A REDUNDANT ONE—NOT TO TRUST *BRAINSTORM*.
THE MOST *COMPLETE* ENTRY RELATES TO THE CHANCE DISCOVERY OF THE NECROBOT'S BASE OF OPERATIONS, WELL, *PLANET* OF OPERATIONS.

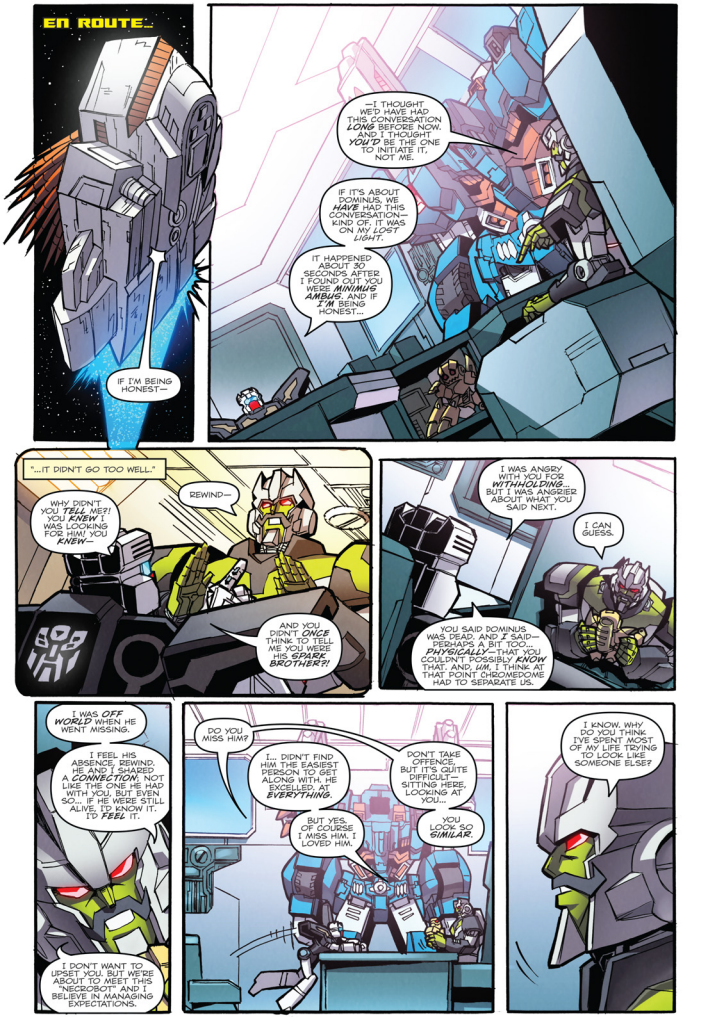
DON'T. REWIND'S BEEN *WEST WING*-ING ME ABOUT IT.
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.
I JUST THINK THE NECROBOT WOULD BE AN INTERESTING PERSON TO MEET. CAN'T *BELIEVE* THE D.J.D. WALKED ON BY!

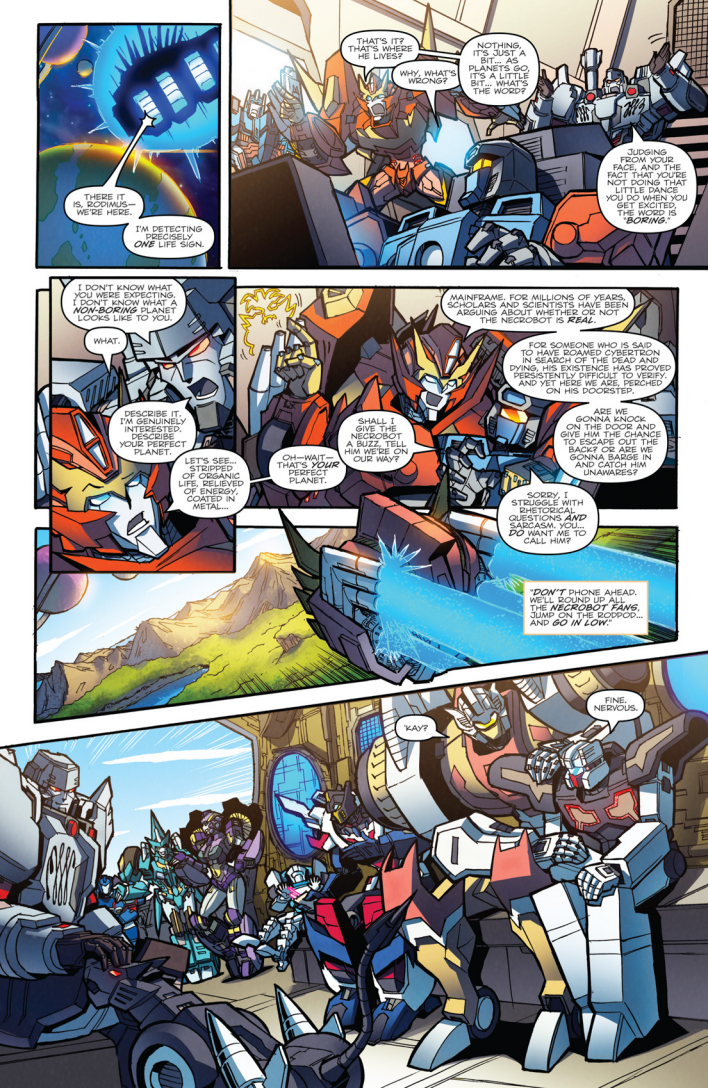
THEY DON'T HAVE TIME TO *SOCIALIZE*.
IN ANY CASE, THIS "NECROBOT"—*IF* HE EXISTS—IS SUPPOSED TO BE *NON-AFFILIATED*. IS HE NOT? TARN WOULD'VE LEFT HIM ALONE.
I STRONGLY SUGGEST WE DO THE SAME.
THIS HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE THE LATEST IN AN LONG LINE OF "QUICK" DETOURS. DID WE LEARN *NOTHING* FROM OUR THREE-WEEK "OVERNIGHT STAY" AT THE *COSMIC CARNIVAL*? APART FROM HOW TO JUGGLE?

THE NECROBOT ISN'T *THAT* FAR AWAY. TWO, THREE QUANTUM JUMPS AND WE'LL BE THERE...
EXCEPT *CYBERUTOPIA* IS *THAT WAY*.
IS IT? UNTIL THUNDERCLASH WAKES UP, WE DON'T *KNOW* THAT.
WE'RE FLYING BLIND.

NOT ANY MORE, CHROMEDOME! NOT ANY MORE!
...
NO *WAY*.
BEHOLD, ONE *HAND DRAWN* MAP TO CYBERUTOPIA.

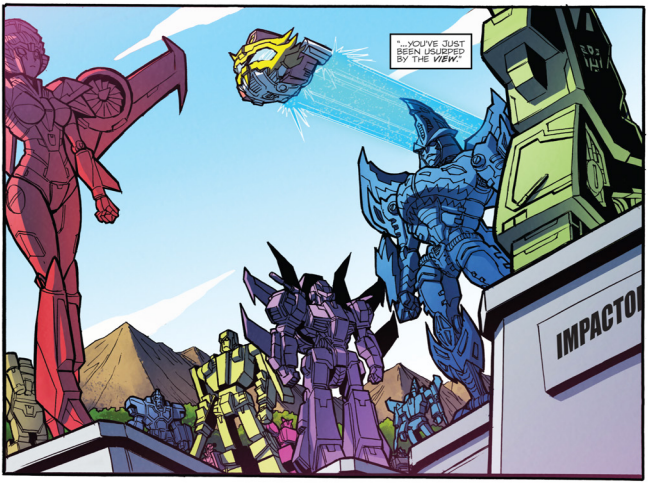
I'VE BEEN DRAWING IT SINCE DAY ONE—DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE MAGNUS SPOTTED IT YESTERDAY, WHEN HE WAS TIDYING UP MY OFFICE.
STRICTLY AS A ONE-OFF...!
Y'KNOW, WE'VE ALL WONDERED WHETHER I HAVE AN UNCONSCIOUS CONNECTION TO PRIMUS, AND THIS PROVES IT.
IS IT TOO SOON TO HAVE "CHOSEN ONE" ENGRAVED ON MY FOREHEAD?
I CAN THINK OF MORE APPROPRIATE WORDS.
TELL HIM.
TELL HIM. REWIND.
THIS... ISN'T ABOUT THE NECROBOT. IT'S ABOUT DOMINUS AMBUS.
YOUR OLD FLAME.
ME, TOO.
IF THE LEGENDS ARE TRUE—IF THE NECROBOT RECORDS EVERYONE'S DEATH—HE'LL KNOW IF DOM IS STILL ALIVE.
FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED AFTER HE WENT MISSING—FINDING OUT IF HE'S OKAY... IT'S WHY I'M ON THIS QUEST, RODIMUS.
IT'S WHY I SIGNED UP.
WELL SAID.
SO, WE CAN GO MEET HIM?
I THINK SO. YES. ONE MORE DETOUR WON'T HURT.
OOPS!


EN ROUTE...
IF I'M BEING HONEST—
—I THOUGHT WE'D HAVE HAD THIS CONVERSATION *LONG* BEFORE NOW. AND I THOUGHT *YOU'D* BE THE ONE TO INITIATE IT, NOT ME.
IF IT'S ABOUT DOMINUS, WE *HAVE* HAD THIS CONVERSATION—KIND OF, IT WAS ON MY *LOST LIGHT*.
IT HAPPENED ABOUT 30 SECONDS AFTER I FOUND OUT YOU WERE *MINIMUS AMBUS*, AND IF *I'M* BEING HONEST...
"...IT DIDN'T GO TOO WELL."
WHY DIDN'T YOU *TELL* ME?! YOU *KNEW* I WAS LOOKING FOR HIM! YOU *KNEW*—
REWIND—
AND YOU DIDN'T *ONCE* THINK TO TELL ME YOU WERE HIS *SPARK BROTHER*?!
I WAS ANGRY WITH YOU FOR *WITHHOLDING*, BUT I WAS ANGRIER ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID NEXT.
I CAN GUESS.
YOU SAID DOMINUS WAS DEAD, AND *I* SAID—PERHAPS A BIT TOO... *PHYSICALLY*—THAT YOU COULDN'T POSSIBLY *KNOW* THAT. AND, *UH*, I THINK AT THAT POINT CHROMEDOME HAD TO SEPARATE US.
I WAS *OFF WORLD* WHEN HE WENT MISSING.
I FEEL HIS ABSENCE, REWIND. HE AND I SHARED A *CONNECTION*, NOT LIKE THE ONE HE HAD WITH YOU, BUT EVEN SO... IF HE WERE STILL ALIVE, I'D KNOW IT. I'D *FEEL* IT.
I DON'T WANT TO UPSET YOU. BUT WE'RE ABOUT TO MEET THIS "NECROBOT" AND I BELIEVE IN MANAGING EXPECTATIONS.
DO YOU MISS HIM?
I... DIDN'T FIND HIM THE EASIEST PERSON TO GET ALONG WITH. HE EXCELLED AT *EVERYTHING*.
BUT YES, OF COURSE I MISS HIM. I LOVED HIM.
DON'T TAKE OFFENCE, BUT IT'S QUITE DIFFICULT SITTING HERE, LOOKING AT YOU...
YOU LOOK SO *SIMILAR*.
I KNOW. WHY DO YOU THINK I'VE SPENT MOST OF MY LIFE TRYING TO LOOK LIKE SOMEONE ELSE?


THERE IT IS, RODIMUS—WE'RE HERE.
I'M DETECTING PRECISELY *ONE* LIFE SIGN.
THAT'S IT? THAT'S WHERE HE LIVES?
WHY, WHAT'S WRONG?
NOTHING. IT'S JUST A BIT... AS PLANETS GO, IT'S A LITTLE BIT... WHAT'S THE WORD?
JUDGING FROM YOUR FACE, AND THE FACT THAT YOU'RE NOT DOING THAT LITTLE DANCE YOU DO WHEN YOU GET EXCITED, THE WORD IS "*BORING*."
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WERE EXPECTING. I DON'T KNOW WHAT A *NON-BORING* PLANET LOOKS LIKE TO YOU.
WHAT.
DESCRIBE IT. I'M GENUINELY INTERESTED. DESCRIBE YOUR PERFECT PLANET.
LET'S SEE... STRIPPED OF ORGANIC LIFE, RELIEVED OF ENERGY, COATED IN METAL...
OH—WAIT—THAT'S *YOUR* PERFECT PLANET.
SHALL I GIVE THE NECROBOT A BUZZ, TELL HIM WE'RE ON OUR WAY?
MAINFRAME. FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS, SCHOLARS AND SCIENTISTS HAVE BEEN ARGUING ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT THE NECROBOT IS *REAL*.
FOR SOMEONE WHO IS SAID TO HAVE ROAMED CYBERTRON IN SEARCH OF THE DEAD AND DYING, HIS EXISTENCE HAS PROVED PERSISTENTLY DIFFICULT TO VERIFY. AND YET HERE WE ARE, PERCHED ON HIS DOORSTEP.
ARE WE GONNA KNOCK ON THE DOOR AND GIVE HIM THE CHANCE TO ESCAPE OUT THE BACK? OR ARE WE GONNA BARGE IN AND CATCH HIM UNAWARES?
SORRY, I STRUGGLE WITH RHETORICAL QUESTIONS *AND* SARCASM. YOU... *DO* WANT ME TO CALL HIM?
"*DON'T* PHONE AHEAD. WE'LL ROUND UP ALL THE *NECROBOT FANS*, JUMP ON THE RECEPTOR... AND *GO IN LOW*."
FINE. NERVOUS.
KAY?

LOOK AT YOU—FIDGETER. YOU'VE GOT THE ITCH.
?
THE DEBUNKING ITCH. YOU CAN'T WAIT TO "EXPLAIN" THE NECROBOT.
NO ITCH. BIT OF A HEADACHE, MAYBE. ANYWAY, YOU CAN TALK—YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN ANYTHING.

I USED TO. I'M A RECOVERING BELIEVER.
BUT I CAN SEE WHY PEOPLE ARE ATTRACTED TO THE IDEA OF THE NECROBOT, WHO DOESN'T WANT TO SURVIVE THE DYING OF THE LIGHT?
NIGHTBEAT?
SORRY, SKIDS...


"...YOU'VE JUST BEEN USURPED BY THE VIEW."
IMPACTO

THEY LOOK LIKE MEMORIAL STATUES.
MEMORIAL STATUES? NO, NO, I DON'T THINK SO.
NONE OF THESE PEOPLE ARE DEAD.
THERE'S ADVOCATE XAARON, AND BEHIND HIM: IRONHIDE AND RAPTOR, AND SCISSORKICK?
AND IS THAT... OVER THERE, BEYOND THAT HILL... I'M SURE THAT'S THE BACK OF YOUR HEAD...

LOOK IN BETWEEN THE STATUES—DOZENS OF EMPTY PLINTHS. HUNDREDS.
WE'RE NEARLY THERE, CAPTAIN. CO-CAPTAIN. CO-CAPTAINS.
EXCELLENT. TAKE US CLOSE...

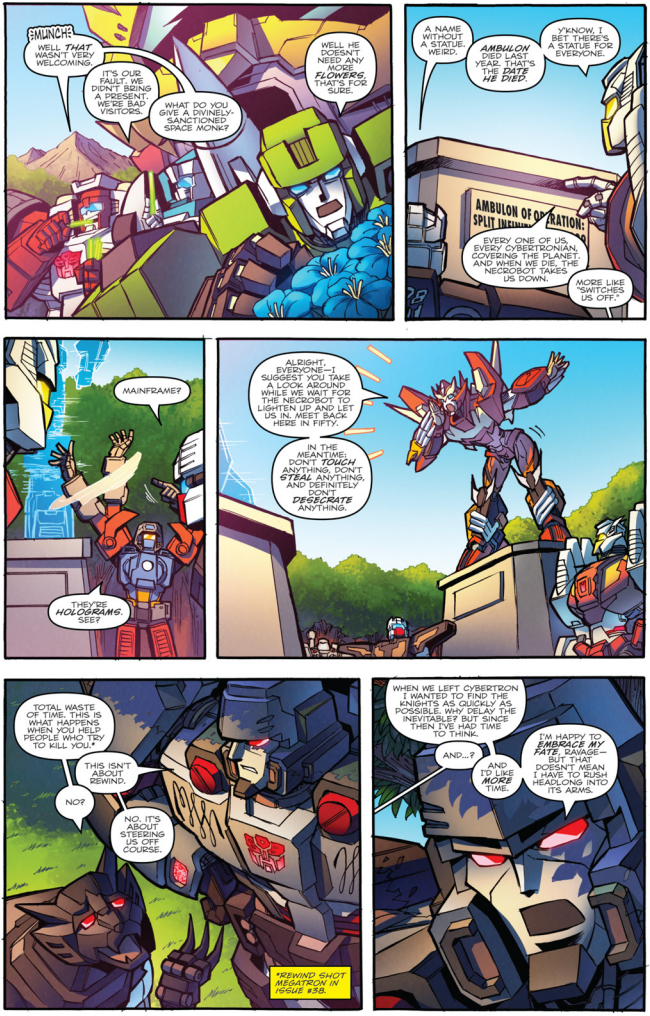
...AND ENGAGE STEALTH MODE.
WE DON'T HAVE A STEALTH MODE.
HUMOR ME.
STEALTH MODE ENGAGED.

THERE! BY THE DOOR!

IT'S HIM!

WAIT—WHY ARE YOU CLOSING THE—
WAIT!

WRUNCH
URGH!


EMUNCH!
WELL *THAT* WASN'T VERY WELCOMING.
IT'S OUR FAULT. WE DIDN'T BRING A PRESENT. WE'RE BAD VISITORS.
WHAT DO YOU GIVE A DIVINELY-SANCTIONED SPACE MONK?
WELL, HE DOESN'T NEED ANY MORE *FLOWERS*, THAT'S FOR SURE.
A NAME WITHOUT A STATUE WEIRD.
AMBULON DIED LAST YEAR. THAT'S THE *DATE HE DIED*.
Y'KNOW, I BET THERE'S A STATUE FOR EVERYONE.
AMBULON OPERATION: SPLIT INSTANT
EVERY ONE OF US, EVERY CYBERTRONIAN, COVERING THE PLANET: AND WHEN WE DIE, THE NECROBOT TAKES US DOWN.
MORE LIKE "SWITCHES US OFF."
MAINFRAME?
THEY'RE *HOLOGRAMS*. SEE?
ALRIGHT, EVERYONE—I SUGGEST YOU TAKE A LOOK AROUND WHILE WE WAIT FOR THE NECROBOT TO LIGHTEN UP AND LET US IN. MEET BACK HERE IN FIFTY.
IN THE MEANTIME, DON'T *TOUCH* ANYTHING, DON'T *STEAL* ANYTHING, AND DEFINITELY DON'T *DEGECRATE* ANYTHING.
TOTAL WASTE OF TIME. THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU HELP PEOPLE WHO TRY TO KILL YOU.*
THIS ISN'T ABOUT REWIND.
NO?
NO. IT'S ABOUT STEERING US OFF COURSE.
*REWIND SHOT MEGATRON IN ISSUE #38.
WHEN WE LEFT CYBERTRON I WANTED TO FIND THE KNIGHTS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. WHY DELAY THE INEVITABLE? BUT SINCE THEN I'VE HAD TIME TO THINK.
AND...?
AND I'D LIKE *MORE* TIME.
I'M HAPPY TO *EMBRACE MY FATE*, RAVAGE—BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I HAVE TO RUSH HEADLONG INTO ITS ARMS.

JUST SO YOU KNOW, I'M STILL HERE. AND I'M *STAYING* HERE UNTIL YOU ANSWER MY QUESTIONS.
KHK
INSIDE.
QUICKLY.

BUMBLEBEE OF IACON CYCLE 1300

OKAY, SO *MAINFRAME* THINKS THAT THE HOLO-STATUES DRAW POWER FROM A *SINGLE SOURCE*, ALLOWING THE NECROBOT TO ACTIVATE AND DEACTIVATE THEM WITHOUT LEAVING HIS... DEATH PALACE.

HE SAID IF THAT *IS* THE CASE, THERE SHOULD BE A *CENTRAL DATABASE* THAT CAN BE ACCESSED FROM *ANY* OF THE STATUES... A DATABASE THAT'LL TELL US WHICH ONES ARE SWITCHED ON AND WHICH ARE SWITCHED OFF—I.E. WHO'S *DEAD* AND WHO *ISN'T*.

FUNNY HOW SOME STATUES HAVE MORE FLOWERS THAN OTHERS.

I WONDER WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO TO EARN A DECENT DISPLAY.

DOMEY...?

I'VE DONE IT! I'M *IN*! I'M INSIDE THE DATABASE!

YOU'RE SO SMART.

PIPES OF PESCUS HEX
STATUS: DEACTIVATED

THERE—I TYPED IN "*PIPES*" AS A TEST.

I'LL TRY "DOMINUS."

WAIT.

DOMINUS AMBUS OF AMBUSTUS MINOR
SEARCH? Y / N

WHAT? WHAT'S UP?

I DON'T KNOW. I THINK—

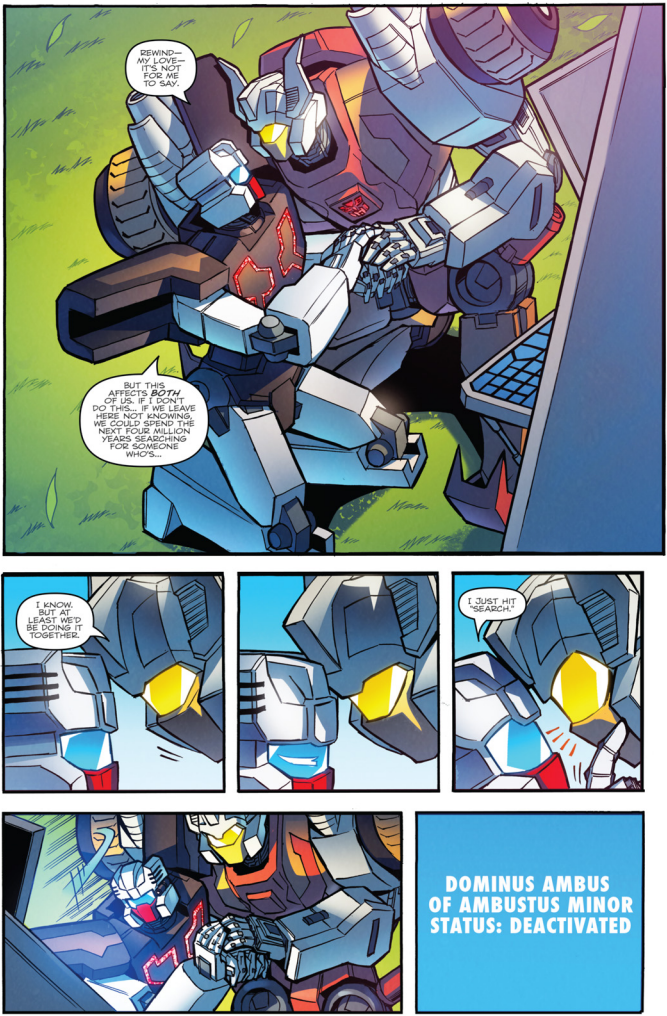
ONCE YOU PRESS "SEARCH," THAT'S IT—I'LL KNOW. I DON'T KNOW IF I'M *READY* TO KNOW.

...

I'M SORRY. THIS IS STUPID. I'M BEING STUPID.

IT'S NOT. AND YOU'RE NOT.

TELL ME WHAT TO DO.


REWIND— MY LOVE— IT'S NOT FOR ME TO SAY.
BUT THIS AFFECTS BOTH OF US. IF I DON'T DO THIS... IF WE LEAVE HERE NOT KNOWING, WE COULD SPEND THE NEXT FOUR MILLION YEARS SEARCHING FOR SOMEONE WHO'S...
I KNOW. BUT AT LEAST WE'D BE DOING IT TOGETHER.
I JUST HIT "SEARCH."
DOMINUS AMBUS OF AMBUSTUS MINOR STATUS: DEACTIVATED

I SHOULDN'T HAVE CLOSED THE DOOR ON YOU. BUT YOU CAUGHT ME OFF GUARD. SOME OF YOUR FRIENDS—BODIMUS OF NYON, CHROMEDOME OF IACON, HOUND OF LOWER MONORLEX... THEY SHOULDN'T BE HERE. I CATALOGUED THEIR DEATHS.

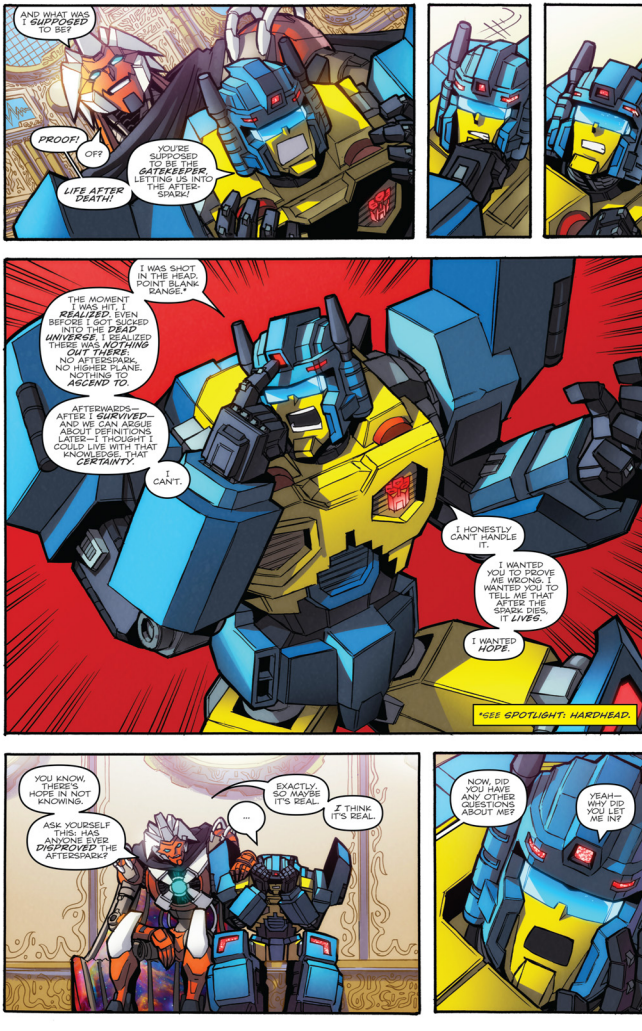
QUANTUM DUPLICATION. LONG, COMPLICATED STORY—WITH A RARE *HAPPY ENDING.*[1]

I'M SURPRISED THAT A *SUPERNATURAL ENTITY* LIKE YOURSELF DIDN'T SENSE THAT SOMETHING WAS *AMISS* WHEN YOU FOUND THEIR BODIES.

AND YOU CAN *TALK!* WHEN DID THE NEKROSIS[1] FIND HIS VOICE?

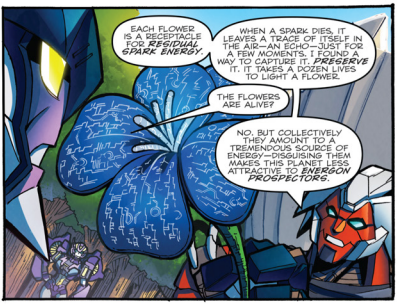
[1]ISSUES #32 AND #33.

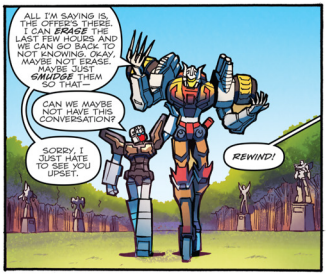
I'LL ADMIT MY TASK BECAME A LOT HARDER AFTER YOUR WAR. I COULDN'T ATTEND PERSONALLY TO ALL OF THE DEAD, BUT I REGISTERED EVERY FATALITY.
I BEAR WITNESS. I PAY MY RESPECTS. I PLANT FLOWERS.
YOU SEEM DISAPPOINTED. DID YOU PERHAPS THINK I WAS MAGIC?
OH NIGHTBEAT. THAT'S NOT LIKE YOU.
SEE? YOU SEE? THERE YOU GO. RIGHT THERE. MAGIC. SPECIAL POWERS. HOW ELSE COULD YOU KNOW WHO I AM, WHAT I'M LIKE?
DON'T FORGET, THE CYBERTRONIAN RACE IS FINITE—WE PEAKED WITH THE SILVER HARVEST. SINCE THE LAST BATCH OF SPARKS WERE THAWED OUT IT'S BEEN A QUESTION OF KEEPING TRACK.
AND THERE ARE RECORDS. POPULATION AUDITS.
NAMES, SPARK SIGNATURES, PERSONALITY PROFILES... IT'S NOT HARD TO WORK OUT WHO'S LEFT, AND WHAT THEY'RE LIKE.
BUT—YOU'RE ALWAYS THERE! IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE A CYBERTRONIAN DIES, YOU'RE THERE! EVERY BATTLEFIELD! EVERY ALIEN PLANET! EVERY SPACESHIP!
EXPLAIN THAT!
QUANTUM TECHNOLOGY—THIS PLACE IS FULL OF IT. TELEPORT CHAMBERS POWERFUL ENOUGH TO SEND ME HALFWAY ACROSS THE GALAXY, WHEREVER I NEED TO BE. I CAN GET THERE.
AH! BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO GO? AND HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN SOMEONE DIES? THAT'S MAGIC.
THIS MACHINE DETECTS SPARK SIGNATURES. LINK IT TO THE QUANTUM DRIVE AND IT CAN SWEEP THE GALAXY.
WE'RE BLIPS ON A GALACTIC RADAR, NIGHTBEAT—AND WHEN A BLIP FLICKERS OR FADES OFF I GO.
...
IN THE MEANTIME, YOU SEEM DETERMINED TO PROVE THAT I'M SOMETHING I'M NOT.
OH, I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE.
YOU'RE A PHONEY. YOU'RE YOU'RE A HOBBYIST. YOU'RE A CORPSE-SPOTTER WITH YOUR—WITH YOUR LITTLE CLIPBOARD, BOUNCING AROUND THE GALAXY, CROSSING OFF NAMES.
THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE.
THAT'S ALL YOU ARE.


AND WHAT WAS I SUPPOSED TO BE?
PROOF!
OFF
LIFE AFTER DEATH!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE GATEKEEPER. LETTING US INTO THE AFTER-SPARK!
I WAS SHOT IN THE HEAD. POINT BLANK RANGE.*
THE MOMENT I WAS HIT, I REALIZED. EVEN BEFORE I GOT SUCKED INTO THE DEAD UNIVERSE, I REALIZED THERE WAS NOTHING OUT THERE: NO AFTERSPARK. NO HIGHER PLANE. NOTHING TO ASCEND TO.
AFTERWARDS—AFTER I SURVIVED—AND WE CAN ARGUE ABOUT DEFINITIONS LATER—I THOUGHT I COULD LIVE WITH THAT KNOWLEDGE. THAT CERTAINTY.
I CAN'T.
I HONESTLY CAN'T HANDLE IT.
I WANTED YOU TO PROVE ME WRONG. I WANTED YOU TO TELL ME THAT AFTER THE SPARK DIES, IT LIVES.
I WANTED HOPE.
*SEE SPOTLIGHT: HARDHEAD.
YOU KNOW, THERE'S HOPE IN NOT KNOWING.
ASK YOURSELF THIS: HAS ANYONE EVER DISPROVED THE AFTERSPARK?
...
EXACTLY. SO MAYBE IT'S REAL.
I THINK IT'S REAL.
NOW, DID YOU HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT ME?
YEAH—WHY DID YOU LET ME IN?

LATER.
CHROMEDOME? REWIND?
YOU SHOULD GET BACK HERE PRONTO—WE'VE GOT A VISITOR...

I KNEW IT. FROM A DISTANCE, THESE FLOWERS LOOK ORGANIC, BUT IT'S A TRICK.
UP CLOSE—BEHIND THE HOLOGRAPHIC CAMOUFLAGE—THEY'RE ARTIFICIAL. THE PETALS ARE CRYSTALLINE—AND THEY'RE GLOWING.
FAKE FLOWERS? WHY DO THAT?
BECAUSE THEY'RE PRECIOUS.


EACH FLOWER IS A RECEPTACLE FOR RESIDUAL SPARK ENERGY.
WHEN A SPARK DIES, IT LEAVES A TRACE OF ITSELF IN THE AIR—AN ECHO—JUST FOR A FEW MOMENTS. I FOUND A WAY TO CAPTURE IT. PRESERVE IT. IT TAKES A DOZEN LIVES TO LIGHT A FLOWER.
THE FLOWERS ARE ALIVE?
NO, BUT COLLECTIVELY THEY AMOUNT TO A TREMENDOUS SOURCE OF ENERGY—DISGUISING THEM MAKES THIS PLANET LESS ATTRACTIVE TO ENERGON PROSPECTORS.


ALL I'M SAYING IS, THE OFFER'S THERE. I CAN ERASE THE LAST FEW HOURS AND WE CAN GO BACK TO NOT KNOWING. OKAY, MAYBE NOT ERASE. MAYBE JUST SMUDGE THEM SO THAT—
CAN WE MAYBE NOT HAVE THIS CONVERSATION?
SORRY, I JUST HATE TO SEE YOU UPSET.
REWIND!

C'MON!
NOT A GOOD TIME, NIGHTBEAT.
I DON'T CARE. I MEAN, I DO CARE—THAT'S WHY I NEED YOU TO COME WITH ME. BOTH OF YOU...

"...I NEED TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING AMAZING."

A MEMORIAL STONE? GUESS I SET MY NON-EXISTENT EXPECTATIONS TOO HIGH...

IT'S A LIST OF NAMES, NIGHTBEAT. TELL ME HOW TO REACT.

THE INSCRIPTION AT THE TOP—THE ONE IN OLD CYBERTRONIAN? WHAT DOES IT SAY?

SIGHS

"IN HONOR OF THE DEAD."

CLOSE. BUT IT'S NOT "DEAD," TED/ "DISAPPEARED."

AND LOOK. THERE'S ME.

NIGHTBEAT

THAT'S WHY THE NECROBOT LET ME IN. I WAS A MYSTERY TO HIM. HE WANTED TO *EXPLAIN* ME.

WHEN I GOT SHOT HE CAME LOOKING FOR ME, BUT HE COULDN'T FIND MY CORPSE. HE SWITCHED OFF MY STATUE AND PUT MY NAME ON THAT STONE—BECAUSE HE KNEW HE WAS ONLY *ASSUMING* I WAS DEAD.*

SO EVERYONE ON THIS LIST IS *UNACCOUNTED* FOR.

MISSING IN ACTION, EXACTLY. THEY'RE *GONE*, BUT HE REMEMBERS THEM—JUST IN CASE ONE DAY THEY COME BACK.

*SEE SPOTLIGHT: HARDHEAD.

NOW—DOWN THERE. RIGHT COLUMN, ON THE BOTTOM.

...

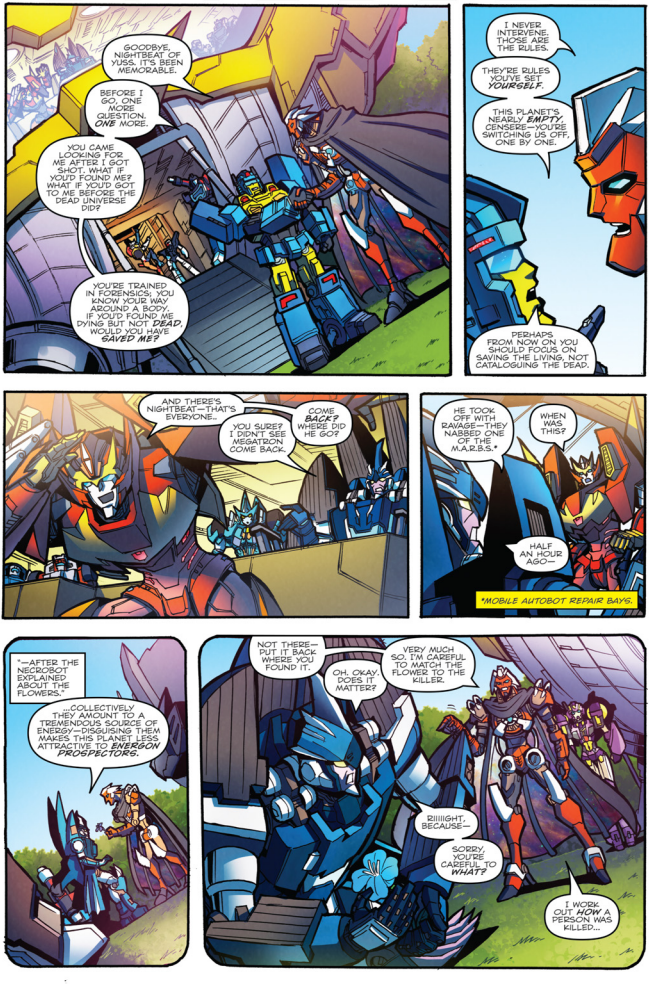
OH MY GOD!

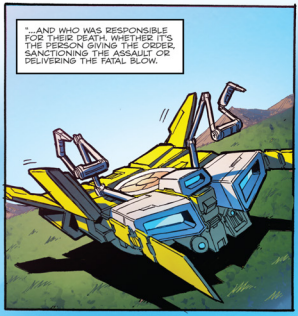
OH MY GOD!

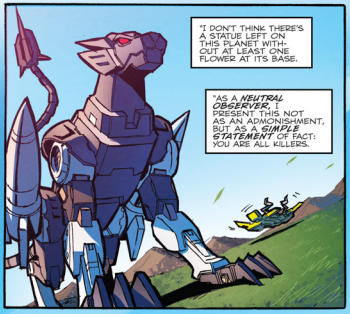
MLET

DOMINUS AMBUS

EPILOGUE


GOODBYE, NIGHTBEAT OF YUSS. IT'S BEEN MEMORABLE.
BEFORE I GO, ONE MORE QUESTION. *ONE* MORE.
YOU CAME LOOKING FOR ME AFTER I GOT SHOT. WHAT IF YOU'D FOUND ME? WHAT IF YOU'D GOT TO ME BEFORE THE DEAD UNIVERSE DID?
YOU'RE TRAINED IN FORENSICS, YOU KNOW YOUR WAY AROUND A BODY. IF YOU'D FOUND ME DYING BUT NOT *DEAD*, WOULD YOU HAVE *SAVED ME?*
I NEVER INTERVENE. THOSE ARE THE RULES.
THEY'RE RULES YOU'VE SET *YOURSELF*.
THIS PLANET'S NEARLY *EMPTY*, CENSERE—YOU'RE SWITCHING US OFF, ONE BY ONE.
PERHAPS FROM NOW ON YOU SHOULD FOCUS ON SAVING THE LIVING, NOT CATALOGUING THE DEAD.
AND THERE'S NIGHTBEAT—THAT'S EVERYONE...
YOU SURE? I DIDN'T SEE MEGATRON COME BACK.
COME *BACK?* WHERE DID HE GO?
HE TOOK OFF WITH RAVAGE—THEY NABBED ONE OF THE M.A.R.B.S.*
WHEN WAS THIS?
HALF AN HOUR AGO—
*MOBILE AUTOBOT REPAIR BAYS.
"—AFTER THE NECROBOT EXPLAINED ABOUT THE FLOWERS."
...COLLECTIVELY THEY AMOUNT TO A TREMENDOUS SOURCE OF ENERGY—DISGUISING THEM MAKES THIS PLANET LESS ATTRACTIVE TO *ENERGON PROSPECTORS.*
NOT THERE—PUT IT BACK WHERE YOU FOUND IT.
OH, OKAY. DOES IT MATTER?
VERY MUCH SO. I'M CAREFUL TO MATCH THE FLOWER TO THE KILLER.
RIIIIIGHT. BECAUSE—
SORRY, YOU'RE CAREFUL TO *WHAT?*
I WORK OUT *HOW* A PERSON WAS KILLED...


"...AND WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR DEATH. WHETHER IT'S THE PERSON GIVING THE ORDER, SANCTIONING THE ASSAULT OR DELIVERING THE FATAL BLOW.


"I DON'T THINK THERE'S A STATUE LEFT ON THIS PLANET WITHOUT AT LEAST ONE FLOWER AT ITS BASE.
"AS A *NEUTRAL OBSERVER*, I PRESENT THIS NOT AS AN ADMONISHMENT, BUT AS A *SIMPLE STATEMENT* OF FACT: YOU ARE ALL KILLERS.

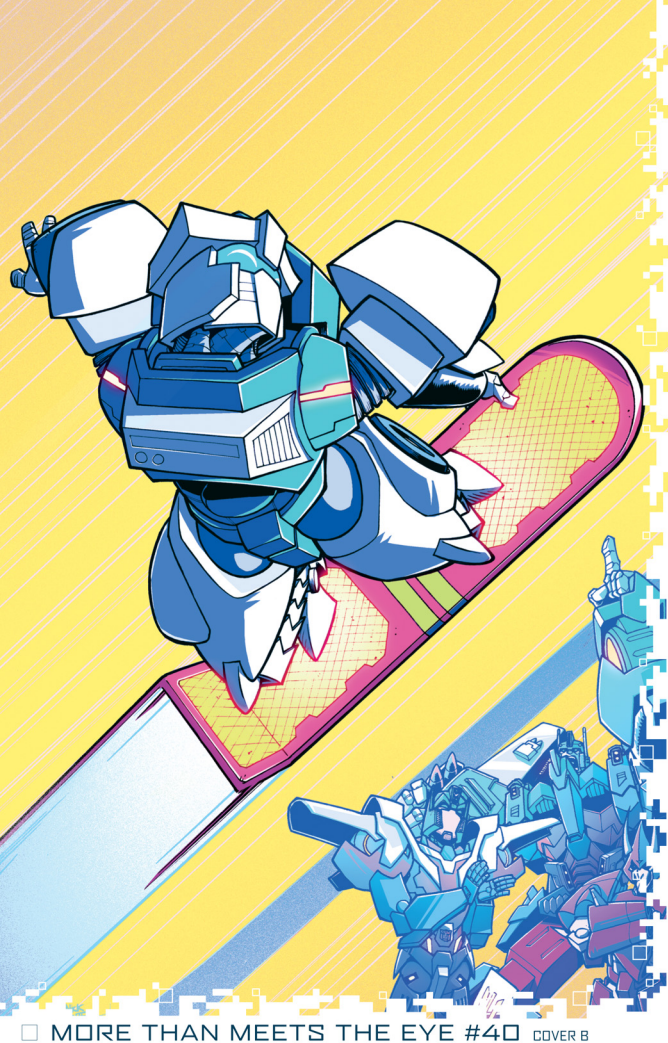
"...BECAUSE YOUR PAST WILL ALWAYS CATCH YOU UNAWARES."

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #39 COVER B

by **NICK ROCHE** Colors by **JOSH BURCHAM**

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #39 COVER RI

by **SARA PITRE-DUROCHER**



MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #40 COVER B

by **NICK ROCHE** Colors by **JOSH BURCHAM**

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #40 COVER RI

by **BRENDAN CAHILL** Colors by **JOANA LAFUENTE**

☐ MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #41 COVER RI

by **KOTTERI**

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #42 COVER RI

by **NAOTO TSUSHIMA** Colors by **YAMAISHI**

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #42 COVER RE

by **SARA PITRE-DUROCHER**

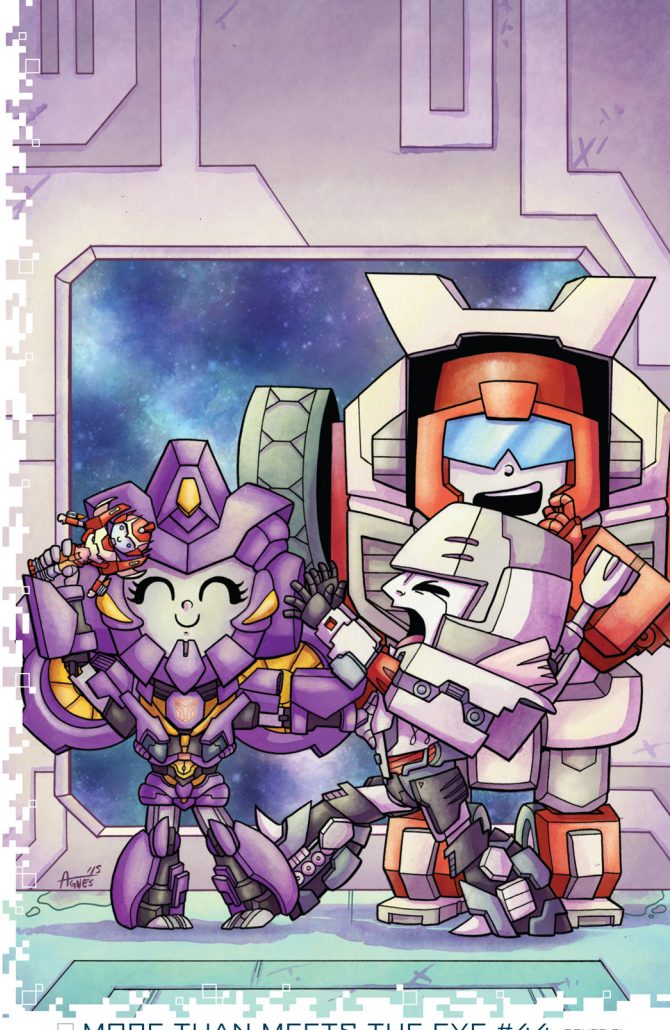
TRANSFORMERS
MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #43 COVER RI

by **JAMES BIGGIE**

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #44 COVER B

by **NICK ROCHE** Colors by **JOSH BURCHAM**

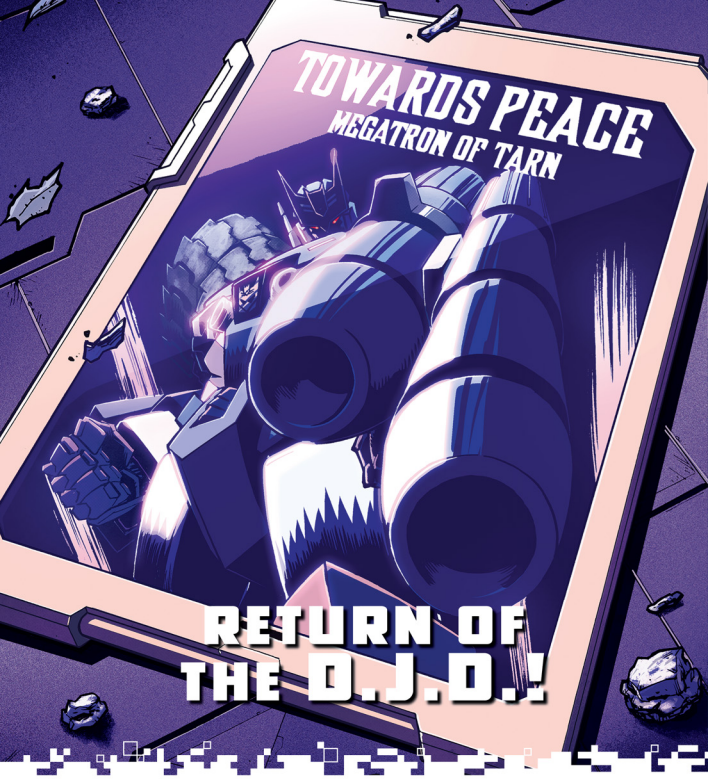


MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE #44 COVER RI

by **AGNES GARBOWSKA**

TRANSFORMERS
MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

VOLUME 8



RETURN OF THE D.J.D.!

The Decepticon Justice Division discovers that Megatron has joined the Autobots, and the crew of the *Lost Light* start to think that the universe holds no more surprises for them. Of course, they are wrong!

Collects issues #39–44.